

# PHILIP II OF MACEDON: ASPECTS OF HIS REIGN

By

BENJAMIN DAVID TURNER

A Thesis Submitted to The University of  
Birmingham for the Degree of  
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity  
College of Arts and Law  
The University of Birmingham  
January 2012

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## Abstract

This study will assess whether there is sufficient surviving source material from the reign of Philip II of Macedon for the modern scholar to reasonably attempt a full-length study. It will do this through three separate case studies.

The first is 'The Military Transformation of Macedon.' This will examine the nature of the threats that Philip faced upon becoming king in 359 BC, and his achievement in overcoming them. It will attempt to understand his impact on the growth in size of the Macedonian army, and thirdly the significance of his introduction of the sarissa, his most celebrated military innovation.

The second section is 'Philip and Athens: War and Peace.' This will attempt to assess Philip's intentions in his dealings with the Greek city by studying his and Athens' approach to the treaty that ended a decade of warfare between the two.

The third section, 'The Murder of Philip II' will examine the circumstances of Philip's assassination. Although the assassin is known to have been a bodyguard, Pausanias, rumours abound in the sources of the involvement of Philip's wife, Olympias, his son Alexander, and of a conspiracy involving nobles from the Upper Macedonian kingdom of Lyncestis.

For J. E., who guided my first steps.

For G. S., who pointed me on my way.

For N. M., who helped me complete the journey.

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### List of Abbreviations

<i>AHB</i>	<i>Ancient History Bulletin</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AM</i>	<i>Ancient Macedonia</i> , Proceedings of the International Symposia on Ancient Macedonia
<i>AncW</i>	<i>Ancient World</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
<i>BSA</i>	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Classical Journal</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CW</i>	<i>Classical World</i>
<i>FGrH</i>	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i>
<i>FHG</i>	C. Müller, <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i>
<i>G&amp;R</i>	<i>Greece &amp; Rome</i>
<i>GHI</i>	M. N. Tod, <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions</i> , Vol. 2
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Society</i>

## Introduction

Various efforts have been made to directly examine the life of Philip II of Macedon, although the achievements of his son, Alexander the Great, have inevitably drawn greater attention from ancient and modern scholars. In addition to the limited attention his reign directly receives in most studies of Alexander's life, several full biographies of Philip have been published. However, the level of attention has ultimately been low. Undoubtedly one of the main reasons for this is the relative, at times near complete, dearth of evidence for large periods of his reign.

It is this point that provides the main inspiration for this work. In theory, one can draw certain conclusions from even the sparsest collection of information. Thus an archaeologist can make certain basic assumptions about the date and provenance of a handful of stone bricks he finds in a field. If pressed to offer a wider, more detailed theory on the structure they formed part of's size, colour and layout however, he could not be expected, given the limited nature of the evidence available, to offer an opinion that was not overwhelmingly conjectural. In the same way, one can attempt to piece together a sequence of events from references and descriptions in source material. However, if the references are scarce or poorly informed, such overall reconstructions begin to rely overly on conjecture and theorising. Therefore this study will not attempt to offer a full biographical study of Philip, but instead an analysis of whether, given the considerable lack of source material for various aspects of his reign, such a full-length evaluation can realistically be completed at all. This will be attempted through the division of the study into three separate essays, each of which will focus on a particular aspect of Philip's rule as a case study for how full a picture can be drawn of Philip's time as king.

The first of these studies will examine aspects of Philip's effect on the Macedonian army. This is of particular significance as almost all descriptions of the military come from accounts of the forces Alexander took with him to, and made use



of in Asia. Little material is available for Philip's reign itself beyond narrative references to his use of the army, meaning that his improvements must be largely inferred from the disparity between Alexander's forces and the few hazy details that survive of military forces in pre-Philippic Macedon. That improvements occurred seems very likely as descriptions of Macedon in 359 depict a state on the verge of collapse, and one that had for some time been without any real military forces. Thus the study will be as much an investigation of the accuracy of such early depictions as of the changes that followed.

The second study will focus on Macedon's relations with Athens. Philip's involvement with the various Greek city-states and the frequently changing factions they made up is far too lengthy and complicated to address in its entirety. Consequently his relations with Athens will be used as a case study of Philip's involvement in Greek politics; whether his entry marked the beginning of a concerted plan to manoeuvre into a position of eventual superiority by careful exploitation of political divisions, or was more the result of his reacting to circumstances and opportunities that occurred largely without his encouragement. Athens offers the best chance for such a study, as it was at war with Macedon for much of Philip's reign, and throughout the period a crucial record of Athenian views on Philip's intentions are offered in the speeches of Demosthenes and Aeschines.

The third essay will investigate the fascinating and confusing affair of Philip's murder. Although the assassin, one Pausanias, is known, the surrounding circumstances are far from clear. Almost all ancient sources allege the involvement of his wife, Olympias, and in some cases, Alexander, due to events shortly before the murder offending the former and apparently throwing doubt on the latter's position as heir. To this modern scholars have added the possibility of a conspiracy involving brothers from the Upper Macedonian state of Lyncestis. Although sources for Philip's death are for once not lacking, most are considerably removed from the matters that they discuss, and suffer from viewing the affairs of a Macedonian court

through Greek eyes. The result is that matters such as polygamy and kingship are at times misunderstood and confusingly presented.

By nature ancient historical scholarship is little more than speculation, inference and assumption, its conclusions almost always comprising what is most likely rather than what is certain. Thus it would be misguided and foolish to hope that together these studies will definitively indicate whether or not the surviving source material for Philip's reign is sufficient for lengthier studies to deliver conclusions with findings of near-certain levels of reliability. However, given that, as has been said, individual conclusions can arguably be drawn from the slightest pieces of circumstantial evidence, these studies will seek to evaluate whether the source material for Philip's reign is sufficient to allow for any lengthier studies to deliver reasonable levels of genuine insight rather than being forced to resort overly to pure speculation to remain coherent.



## Literary Overview

Frustratingly, none of the histories involving Philip written contemporarily survive intact. Only a series of fragments remain where subsequent writers quoted the authors' works. Foremost among these is Theopompus of Chios, from whose 58-book *Philippica* over 200 fragments survive. Writing in the late 330s and early 320s, Theopompus visited Macedon during Philip's reign, and met the king himself.<sup>1</sup> He famously opened his work with the remark that "Europe had never produced such a man as Philip, son of Amyntas,"<sup>2</sup> but surviving fragments suggest this was not meant well; Theopompus' depiction of Philip is characterised by excess, particularly with regard to drink and sexual appetite. He disregards his friends and allies, spends money he does not have, and owed his success to luck, and his dishonourable ability to exploit a similar moral decline amongst the Greeks.<sup>3</sup> For this he drew the ire of Polybius, who was particularly incensed by Theopompus' undermining his own opening statement, as it was this that suggested why he chose to write about Philip in the first place:

"Everyone must disapprove of such bitter feeling and lack of restraint on the part of this writer. For not only does he deserve blame for using language which contradicts his statement of the object he had in writing, but for falsely accusing the king and his friends, and especially for making this false accusation in coarse and unbecoming terms."<sup>4</sup>

Theopompus' *Philippica* is the work of a conservative, whose observations at the Macedonian court apparently confirmed in his mind many traditional Greek prejudices regarding 'uncivilised' Macedonians. So appalled was he by Greece's falling to the worst of such men, he concluded that it was essentially as corrupt and uncivil, and deserved its fate. Away from his fiercely opinionated depictions of key figures however, Theopompus appears largely reliable. Various fragments give important information on, amongst other things, the scale and location of the

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<sup>1</sup> On Theopompus, see esp. Flower 1994, 19f, and chap 3; Shrimpton 1977, 123-44 and 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Theop. *FGrH* n. 115 F27.

<sup>3</sup> Polyb. 8.11.5-13 = *FGrH* n. 115 F225a. Ath. 4.166F – 7C = F224; 620D – 1A = F225b.

<sup>4</sup> Polyb. 8.10.1-3. Cf. 8.3-9.13.

Thracian kingdom of Cotys<sup>5</sup>, Athenian attempts to secure Amphipolis from Philip,<sup>6</sup> and the king's activities during the siege of Olynthus.<sup>7</sup> Although in several cases he is the only source available, there is no obvious need for him to have exaggerated or invented circumstances. The fact that many of the fragments survive through quotation by later authors supports the idea that his work was trusted in this respect.

Many of the other fragmentary contemporary sources are best approached through an examination of the *Historical Library* of Roman Diodorus Siculus, who wrote in the first century BC.<sup>8</sup> A universal history running down to the time of Caesar, only 15 of its 40 books survive. Book 16 is concerned with the reign of Philip, and provides the first continuous narrative of Philip's reign. To fit the 'universal' nature of his work Diodorus frequently jumped between different narratives. In his 'The Sources of Diodorus XVI,'<sup>9</sup> N. G. L. Hammond conducted a detailed assessment of which sources Diodorus had used at which points, and concluded that the chapter could be divided into three groups. Down to 340, his source was Ephorus of Cyme, in Asia Minor. Living in the fourth century, Ephorus apparently enjoyed a reputation amongst ancient writers for accuracy and clarity. A pupil of Isocrates, he shared with his teacher a view of Philip as unifier of Greece.<sup>10</sup> Diodorus states however that Ephorus' account did not include the Third Sacred War (357/6-347/6), and that his source for such matters was instead Ephorus' son Demophilus, who filled the gap in his father's work. Diodorus also states that the first volume of the *Syntaxis* by the fourth century Diyllus of Athens began at the same point.<sup>11</sup> Hammond's conclusion was that Demophilus' work informed Diodorus' account of the Sacred War, and the *Syntaxis* other events in Greece and Macedon. Similarly, Diodorus' announcement that Ephorus' account ended in 340, and that the second volume of Diyllus' *Syntaxis* began at that point was taken to indicate that having reverted to Ephorus' account

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<sup>5</sup> Theop. *FGrH* n. 115 F31.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, 30A & B.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, F137 & 8.

<sup>8</sup> On Diodorus, see esp. Sacks 1990 and 1994, 213-32; McQueen 1995.

<sup>9</sup> Hammond 1937, 79-91 and 1938, 37-51.

<sup>10</sup> Hammond 1994, 15.

<sup>11</sup> Diod. 16.14.3.

for 347/6-340, he was returning to Diyllus' text for that point onwards.<sup>12</sup> Little can be said of Demophilus other than it would seem that ancient writers viewed his work with a similar level of approval to that of his father's. In his remaining fragments, the Athenian Diyllus "shows his interest in scandal, bribery and a Macedonian state function."<sup>13</sup> Hammond's interpretation, written in the late 1930s, has seen no serious rejection by modern scholars, and was presented with slight revisions in his 1994 biography of Philip.<sup>14</sup> It has been followed in this work, as the author has been similarly unable to raise any serious objection with it.

Diodorus' account demonstrates well the benefits and frustrations of general historical works offer. At times the wider focus does much to fill in crucial background information and provide context to situations. Thus Diodorus' summary of the threats facing Philip in 359 is key to understanding the king's achievement in dealing with them; equally important is the outline of the previous fifty years, as it can be observed that the problems were long-standing ones, and formed part of a cycle that had proved inescapable to all Philip's predecessors.<sup>15</sup> However, the need on the author's part not to dwell overly on a particular area at the expense of others can lead to omissions, over-simplifications and compressions of information and timescales. Diodorus in particular can confuse his subject matter at times; his account of the rebellion of Attalus following Philip's death and Alexander's successful attempt to deal with it does not make sense in the time scale he presents. Similarly, his inclusion of two men named Pausanias in the events surrounding Philip's murder has suggested to some a serious misunderstanding of events.<sup>16</sup> Despite these problems Diodorus' account generally seen to be quite reliable by modern scholars due to his use of contemporaneous source material. It provides an invaluable framework on which detail from other less general works and fragments can be hung.

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<sup>12</sup> Diod. 16.76.5.

<sup>13</sup> Hammond 1994, 13.

<sup>14</sup> Hammond 1994, 12.14.

<sup>15</sup> See below, pp16-34.

<sup>16</sup> See below, pp109-13 (Attalus' treason); pp135-9 (the two Pausaniases).

The other continuous surviving source for Philip's reign is the *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus* by Justin.<sup>17</sup> Written in the first century BC, Trogus' original work has not survived.<sup>18</sup> Justin's abridged version was composed at some point between the second and fourth centuries AD.<sup>19</sup> In 1991 Hammond applied the same method of source analysis to books 7, 8, and 9 as he had to Diodorus' book 16. Once again, the author has found no objection to following his interpretation.

Hammond's conclusions were again that the material could be divided into three groups. The parts in book 7 that focused on Macedonian history were most likely taken from the *Macedonia* of Marsyas Macedon, the only Macedonian historian known to us for this period. A contemporary of Alexander and his Successors, Marsyas' work ran from the earliest kings of Macedon down to his own time. The second group, comprising the sections in books 7 and 9 that dealt with Macedonian royal women, particularly Olympias and Eurydice, was identified as being taken from the *Life of Philip* by Satyrus the Peripatetic. A third century philosopher and historian from Callatis on the Black Sea coast, Satyrus' chief use to the modern scholar lies in his description, reproduced in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus, of Philip's seven marriages. Fragments of his biography of the dramatist Euripides indicate that he frequently used unreliable sources for his works,<sup>20</sup> and he seems to have possessed a keen interest in the gossip and scandal of the Macedonian court. His description of the argument that arose between Philip, Alexander and Attalus following the former's marriage to Cleopatra is particularly frenzied,<sup>21</sup> and Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* preserves his somewhat overwrought claims regarding Philip's falling in love with and dramatic loss of interest in Olympias.<sup>22</sup> The former comprises the young Philip falling instantly in love with Olympias upon meeting her, whilst the latter involves Olympias being observed

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<sup>17</sup> Hammond 1991, 496-508.

<sup>18</sup> On Trogus, see esp. Alonso-Núñez 1987, 56-72; Heckel & Develin 1994; Yardley 2003.

<sup>19</sup> See Syme 1988, 358-71.

<sup>20</sup> Hunt 1912, 124-82, n. 1176.

<sup>21</sup> Ath 13.557 d-e; Just. 9.7.3-5; Plut. *Alex.* 9.4-5. See below, pp 99-104.

<sup>22</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2.1 and 2.6. See below, pp 90-92.

sleeping with a serpent; both situations demand information that was hardly likely to have been disclosed publicly and was most likely invented or exaggerated. Hammond identified the third group of Justin's work, comprising the remainder of book 7, most of book 8 and the latter part of book 9 as coming from the work of Theopompus, whose work has already been discussed.

Justin's work has generally been seen as less reliable than Diodorus, as it relies considerably on the somewhat salacious and/or opinionated work Satyrus and Theopompus. The presentation of Olympias in particular is biased in the extreme, forcing one to rely on other corroborating material to disentangle truth from fiction. It also seems to misunderstand various matters to do with the Macedonian court. Several references are made to Philip's divorcing Olympias in favour of Cleopatra, which shows a clear misunderstanding of the polygamous nature of Philip's marriages.<sup>23</sup> However, the biggest problem with Justin's account is its compression. By definition the *Epitome* is an abridgment of a larger work, and in addition Justin states in his preface that his approach was to include only "what was worth knowing...omitting what was neither pleasurable to learn nor necessary as an example."<sup>24</sup> As with Diodorus, this makes understanding events' relation to each other difficult, as various matters' presentation strongly suggest their being oversimplified or misunderstood.

Away from history, one also has the *Lives* of Plutarch of Chaeronea.<sup>25</sup> Written in the second century AD these were a series of parallel studies comparing the biographies of significant Romans and Greeks whose careers and/or characters, Plutarch felt, followed similar trajectories. Frustratingly, no *Life of Philip* was composed, meaning the most significant work is his *Alexander*. Biographies of Demosthenes, Phocion, Pelopidas also provide important information. Plutarch made use in many cases of contemporary sources, and provides several important

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<sup>23</sup> Just. 9.5.9, 7.2, 11.11.3-5.

<sup>24</sup> Just. *Preface*.

<sup>25</sup> On Plutarch, see esp. Russell 1973; Duff, 1999; Pelling 2002.



anecdotes concerning Philip's interaction with the young Alexander.<sup>26</sup> However, his focus being the son rather than the father, and his interest always being the moral character of his subjects, rather than blow-by-blow accounts of their actions inspires several potential issues. He was by nature selective with the information his work included, and he would have had a vested interest both in painting Alexander in a positive light with regard to his behaviour at court, and not above adapting or even inventing if he felt it served to emphasise a point. In addition, Plutarch's focus being Alexander rather than Philip means that at times he makes no mention of matters which occur in other sources, potentially throwing doubt on their veracity by offering no corroboration. Conversely, he describes events which do not appear in Diodorus or Justin as they concern minor events in Alexander's life. A notable example of this is the disagreement which reportedly arose between Philip and Alexander following the latter's offering himself as a potential husband for the daughter of the Carian satrap Pixodarus, in opposition to Philip's choice of Arrhidaeus.<sup>27</sup> No other source mentions the occurrence. Although this could be due to invention, it could equally be due to their authors feeling the event was of such marginal significance in Philip's life that it did not justify inclusion. In spite of the challenge such cases present, Plutarch is a useful and largely reliable source for the end of Philip's reign and events surrounding his death.

The various surviving speeches from the Athenian orators Aeschines and Demosthenes offer an invaluable insight into Philip's relationship with Athens. Both address contemporary events in which they actually participated. However, their speeches' purpose and method of delivery means that their testimony must be received with the utmost suspicion.<sup>28</sup> The chief reason for this is that the orations were composed not as historical documents, but as exercises in rhetoric, designed to persuade an audience by any means necessary that the author's claims should be favoured over those of his opponent. In achieving this, as one historian has put it,

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<sup>26</sup> See below, pp 92-3.

<sup>27</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 10.1-3. See below, pp114-7.

<sup>28</sup> Buckler 2000, 148.

“[the] truth was often as valuable to them as sand is in a desert.”<sup>29</sup> Demosthenes provides the greater number of surviving speeches, and he especially “does not flinch from distorting, or perhaps even inventing, facts.”<sup>30</sup> A clear example concerns a letter which arrived in Athens shortly after the return of the First Embassy sent by Athens to discuss peace terms with Philip. It cryptically referred to “benefits” that Athens would enjoy were peace to be agreed, and Demosthenes subsequently accused Aeschines of being bribed by Philip to write it himself.<sup>31</sup> Quite apart from the complete lack of evidence to support such a claim, Aeschines comprehensively rejects it by indicting the impracticality of such an arrangement.<sup>32</sup> Elsewhere Demosthenes accuses Aeschines of conspiring to omit Athens’ allies, the Thracian king Cersebleptes and the cities of Halus and Phocis from the peace,<sup>33</sup> but undermines his own allegation by changing the timing of this supposed action at different point in his speech.<sup>34</sup>

In addition, the nature of the speeches means that one is forced to contend to a far greater degree with the authors’ personal attitudes towards their subject matter than with chroniclers of ancient events, where there is usually an attempt to record detachedly events as they actually occurred. Thus when Demosthenes in particular discusses matters even tangentially related to Philip, his claims are greatly influenced by his fervent beliefs that the Macedonian king was bent on ending Greek, and particularly Athenian independence. This situation, already difficult, is complicated even further for the modern historian by the fact that Aeschines was Demosthenes’ fierce political rival. His few surviving speeches deal with his own defence against accusations brought by Demosthenes regarding the former’s role in securing Athenian peace with Philip in 346. The various benefits promised by Philip and relayed to the Athenian Assembly by the embassy, which included both Aeschines and Demosthenes, had not materialised. In attempting to avoid the

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<sup>29</sup> Buckler 2000, 148.

<sup>30</sup> Errington 1990, 75-6.

<sup>31</sup> Dem. 19.38-41.

<sup>32</sup> Aesch. 2.124.

<sup>33</sup> Dem. 19.44, 47, 174, 278, 321. See below, pp75-6.

<sup>34</sup> Dem. 19.159, 278.

resultant frustration of the Athenian populace, “both men had strong reasons to obscure or distort the truth about certain vital elements” when discussing their involvement in negotiations.<sup>35</sup>

However, despite these issues, the speeches of Aeschines and Demosthenes provide a priceless insight into Athenian attitudes towards Philip. Even with their varying versions of events and opinions on situations they provide a crucial outline of the Athens and Macedon’s interaction and the steps it took for peace to be agreed.

References to Philip also appear in Arrian’s *Anabasis of Alexander* and Curtius Rufus’ *The History of Alexander*, both written in the first century AD. The former provides important information on the Macedonian military, and although its first two books are lost, the latter offers important information on the matter of potential Lyncestian involvement in Philip’s death.<sup>36</sup> Arrian being a man of considerable military experience, combined with his frequent use of Ptolemy as a source has led to his being viewed as generally reliable. Curtius has gained a reputation for self-contradiction and ignorance of geography, chronology and understanding of military matters.<sup>37</sup> However, he does offer information not provided elsewhere, and considerable detail on many important matters. Small but important references to Philip also occur in the works of Polyaeus (second century AD), Polybius (second century BC, often commenting on his now lost sources’ veracity), Strabo (first century BC – first century AD), Theophrastus (third century BC) and Asclepiodotus Tacitus (first century BC).

Altogether then, the surviving record of Philip’s reign is distinctly non-contemporary and distinctly non-Macedonian. That none of the multiple works on Philip have survived to modern times goes a long way towards explaining why Philip has not received the same study as his son. Given that, as has been said, the purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which the modern author can construct a

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<sup>35</sup> Buckler 2000, 117.

<sup>36</sup> See below, pp135-41.

<sup>37</sup> See Yardley 2001, 14f.

biography of Philip, and it is with the above shortcomings and biases of this data that this study must contend, how should such a work conduct its analysis of the above material?

The general histories of Diodorus and Justin will often provide the backbone of each chapter. Their continuous narratives will, if nothing else provide a framework of events to which greater detail can subsequently be added. Such works also offer some context, which is key to understanding the significance of the events which are presented. Thus, as will be seen, some background is created in the investigation of the events of 359, aiding attempts to comprehend the significance of Philip's achievement in surviving his first year as king.

Using such works is not without problems however. The broader approach inevitably means that some events are compressed, over-simplified or even omitted completely. There is also a tendency in such works for matters which benefit from a degree of specialist understanding to be presented in a frustratingly limited form. In particular descriptions of battles and military matters are often reduced to basic lists of numbers, with forces divided simply into infantry and cavalry. This makes understanding the way in which Philip effected change to Macedon's military difficult.

It is thus to this basic framework that greater detail can be added by other references, usually fragmentary or passing, taken from works whose primary focus is elsewhere. This has the benefit at times of bringing specialist knowledge or detailed focus to a matter that would otherwise remain at a frustrating distance. Thus the section in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* that discusses Greek and Macedonian attitudes to wives and mistresses provides crucial insight into the matter of Philip's polygamous marriages, and the context in which they were made. However, the potential result of such material's alternative focus can be that only details relevant to the individual's work are mentioned. As has already been mentioned, the case of Alexander's involvement with Pixodarus demonstrates well the positives and

negatives of this situation. Information that is otherwise be unknown is presented, but its very uniqueness raises questions about its reliability and the general reliability of the source that provides it.

Thus all the available material can be seen to potentially bring answers whilst inevitably creating further questions. Such situations vary in each circumstance, and the author's responses will be demonstrated in the coming chapters.



## The Military Transformation of Macedon

### I. Introduction

As has already been mentioned, very little source material survives concerning the nature of Macedon's armies before or during Philip's reign. The purpose of this chapter is thus to investigate firstly the state of the Macedonian military in 359, and secondly, the nature of the changes that Philip was responsible for making during his reign.

In doing so this chapter will firstly consider the immediate historical background to Philip's accession. The Macedonian state was frequently on the defensive in the first half of the fourth century, with foreign incursions and internal chaos causing constant problems. It is against this overview that the circumstances Philip was forced to deal with upon acceding in 359 will be examined. Philip's becoming king was the result of the death of his predecessor in battle with an invading Illyrian army. In addition to this threat Philip was faced with raids from Paeonian and two pretenders to his throne, backed separately by the Athenians and the Thracians. Discerning how great a danger each of these threats really posed should indicate the capabilities of the Macedonian military at the start of Philip's reign.

Having attempted to gain some insight into the capacity of Macedon's forces (or lack thereof) at the start of Philip's reign, the focus will shift to the alterations that occurred during the remainder of it. This will firstly comprise an examination of the change in the military's size. Descriptions of the army Philip led in 359 and that which Alexander took to Asia in 334 suggest a vast increase in scale. Exactly how fair an impression this is will be assessed. The brief surviving references to the army's levels of organisation, training and general professionalism will also be examined, as will the impact of Philip's changes to the army's makeup and his supposed key

innovation, the sarissa. Almost all descriptions of this weapon and its use by Macedonian forces come from the reign of Alexander. The fundamental way in which his armies were based around its use would suggest it was not newly introduced during his reign. Instead, it would seem more likely that its employment began and was perfected during Philip's reign, something that is hinted at by the few tentative references to sarissas at this time.

The questions this chapter will discuss are thus firstly, the true extent of Philip's achievement in seeing off the threats he faced at the start of his reign, and secondly, the scale of his influence on and changes to the Macedonian army. Although conclusions to these questions will be reached, the issue of whether or not, given the nature and quantity of the surviving evidence, such judgements have any real value will also be addressed.



## II. The Historical Context

Before investigating the challenges that faced Philip upon his accession, one should examine the period immediately preceding 359. Understanding the context of the threats he faced upon becoming king should help greatly in judging their severity, and thus the extent of Philip's achievement in dealing with them.

The fourth century opened in Macedon with the death of a king, Archelaus, in 399. The security and relative stability that his long reign had offered swiftly descended into dynastic turmoil, as five kings ruled and were overthrown in the following six years.<sup>38</sup> The last was Amyntas III, whose reign, although lengthy (393/2-370/69) did not see a return to the stability of Archelaus'. Soon after his accession a series of incursions by the Illyrians began under their king Bardylis. Amyntas was driven from his throne and only restored with Thessalian aid.<sup>39</sup> He was ousted again in 383/2 by a pretender, Argeus, and only returned after two years with the assistance of the Olynthians, leaders of the Chalcidian League to the south.<sup>40</sup> Such support came at a price however; control of much of Lower Macedon, including the capital Pella, was granted to the League. When Amyntas sought it back, conflict was inevitable. Although he had no doubt strengthened his position, Amyntas was outclassed. He only survived thanks to the Spartans who, concerned at the growth of Olynthian power, invaded Chalcidice in 382 and after capturing Olynthus three years later, dissolved the League.<sup>41</sup> Unable to challenge the power of Pherae that arose in Thessaly in the League's place, Amyntas allied with Athens against it. Although Athens initially sought to re-establish its Aegean empire, by the end of the 370s its attention was focused on western Greece, and Amyntas was forced to ally with Pherae's ruler, Jason, in 371/0.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Diod. 14.37.6.

<sup>39</sup> Porphy. *FHG* 3.691 F1. Cf. Diod. 14.92.3.

<sup>40</sup> Diod. 15.19.2.

<sup>41</sup> Invasion: Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.24; Diod. 15.20.2f. Victory and dissolution of the League: Xen. *Hell.* 5.3.26; Diod. 15.23.3.

<sup>42</sup> Diod. 15.60.2.

Within a year both men were dead, and Amyntas was succeeded by Alexander II (370/69 – 368/7). The new king immediately faced multiple threats to his rule; to prevent internal uprisings he exiled various opponents, including Amyntas' former advisor, Ptolemy 'The Alorite'.<sup>43</sup> To avoid further Illyrian invasion he was forced to pay extensively and surrender hostages, including his younger brother, Philip.<sup>44</sup> Faced with renewed Pherean pressure, Alexander attempted to go on the offensive by supporting the city of Larissa in its struggle with Pherae for control of the Thessalian League. The move was misjudged however; not only did he swiftly lose control of the two cities he captured due to insufficient military strength,<sup>45</sup> Ptolemy seized the chance to return to Macedon in his absence. The arrival of a Theban army, sent by Pherae's allies in the Boeotian League, ended any Macedonian hopes of expansion in Thessaly. Instead, Alexander fell into conflict with Ptolemy, and was forced to rely on the Theban general, Pelopidas, to retain his throne. This cost him dearly, as Pelopidas recalled the opponents Alexander had exiled and took hostages to Thebes, including Philip, only recently returned from Illyria.<sup>46</sup> Alexander did not suffer the humiliation of ruling as a Theban satellite for long; in the summer of 368 he was assassinated, and Ptolemy assumed the throne as regent for Alexander's younger brother Perdiccas.<sup>47</sup>

The confusion that surrounded the succession was exploited by Olynthus who, following Sparta's defeat to Thebes at the Battle of Leuctra in 371, had begun rebuilding the Chalcidian League. Having already fought with Athens for control of Amphipolis, the Olynthians attempted to push into Macedon, and supported one Pausanias against Ptolemy. The latter was forced to ally with Athens once more to expel the pretender,<sup>48</sup> but this caused Pelopidas to return, take further hostages and install a garrison at Pella.<sup>49</sup> Secure, though hardly independent, Ptolemy sought to bring Amphipolis back under Macedonian control. An attempted alliance with the

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<sup>43</sup> Plut. *Pelop.* 26.5.

<sup>44</sup> Just. 7.5.1.

<sup>45</sup> Diod. 15.62.4.

<sup>46</sup> Diod. 15.67.4; Plut. *Pelop.* 26.5.

<sup>47</sup> Diod. 15.71.1; Aesch. 2.29. See. Griffith 1979, 181 n. 2.

<sup>48</sup> Aesch. 2.27-9.

<sup>49</sup> Plut. *Pelop.* 27.2.3.

city fell through however, and only succeeded in alienating Athens.<sup>50</sup> Shortly after, in 365, Ptolemy was assassinated by Perdiccas, for whom he was regent, having refused to surrender the throne.<sup>51</sup>

Perdiccas III (365/4-360/59) quickly worked to secure his position by allying again with Athens<sup>52</sup> against the Chalcidian League, to whom Amphipolis had turned when Ptolemy's efforts had failed to provide an alliance. However, when Athens closed on Amphipolis once more, the city offered itself to Perdiccas, who took the opportunity and installed a garrison.<sup>53</sup> Athens promptly turned on him and captured a series of cities along the Macedonian coast.<sup>54</sup> Perdiccas managed to maintain his throne, and significantly kept control of Amphipolis. However, the Illyrian threat to the north had grown once more, and 359 brought invasion:

"[Perdiccas] was defeated in a great battle by the Illyrians and fell in action...Philip, his brother, who had escaped from his detention as a hostage, succeeded to the kingdom...The Macedonians had lost more than four thousand men in the battle, and the remainder, panic-stricken, had become exceedingly afraid of the Illyrian armies and lost heart for continuing the war."<sup>55</sup>

Modern scholars have generally agreed "the potential merits of the Macedonian kingdom were not realised"<sup>56</sup> during the forty years leading up to Philip's accession. As one historian put it:

"In the opening chapters of his history Thucydides defined the obstacles which prevent the growth of any significant degree of power: unsettled population, political instability, lack of capital resources, and limited range. In 399-359 Macedon failed to surmount these obstacles."<sup>57</sup>

The period was characterised by frequent internal strife.<sup>58</sup> Ten kings reigned in forty years, and each one's death plunged the country into disorder that Macedon's

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<sup>50</sup> Aesch. 2.29.

<sup>51</sup> Diod. 15.77.5. See Griffith 1979, 186.

<sup>52</sup> Dem. 2.14.

<sup>53</sup> Diod. 16.3.3.

<sup>54</sup> Pydna and Methone: Dem. 4.4; Din. 1.14. Torone: Diod. 15.81.6. Potidaea: Diod. *ibid*; Isoc. 15.113.

<sup>55</sup> Diod. 16.2.4-5.

<sup>56</sup> Hammond 2004, 7.

<sup>57</sup> Hammond 1979, 199.

<sup>58</sup> Heskell 1997, 172f.

neighbours were quick to exploit. The frequent incursions by Athenians, Boeotians, Chalcidians, Illyrians and Spartans kept Macedon in an ongoing state of financial weakness. Alexander II coined only in bronze, and Perdiccas III, though initially in silver, later the same.<sup>59</sup> Bardylis' expansion however, brought him "the silver mines at Damastium,"<sup>60</sup> whilst Amphipolis and the cities of the Chalcidian League regularly minted silver coins, and occasionally gold.<sup>61</sup> This prevented successive Macedonian kings from assembling any strong military forces, a challenge that was made harder by the lack of a centralised populace – "the peoples of Upper Macedonia were mainly nomadic pastoralists, and the cities of Lower Macedonia were still at an early age of development."<sup>62</sup> The result was its kings being concerned almost entirely with keeping foreign powers at bay, and only being able to do so through alliances with stronger forces who were interested in using Macedon to achieve their own regional interests. Whenever a king attempted to exploit rivals' attention being elsewhere, there was always another power to not only curtail their ambitions, but to reduce their power even further. Each time Macedon seemingly became ever more a satellite to whichever force was dominant at the time and the likelihood of a lapse back into internal chaos grew. Philip therefore acceded in 359 to a world where security came at the price of dependence, lasted only as long as one's allies' attention was not elsewhere, and to which, thanks to a lack of strong domestic military forces, there was no apparent alternative.

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<sup>59</sup> Alexander: Gaebler 1935, 2.161, xxx, 12-17; Perdiccas: *ibid*, xxxi. 28.

<sup>60</sup> Str. 7C 326. Damastium had been minting silver since c. 395 – see May 1939, xii 17a, and Hammond 1979, 191 n. 4.

<sup>61</sup> Amphipolis: Gaebler 1935, 30f; The League: 27f.

<sup>62</sup> Hammond 1979, 199.

### III. The Miracle of 359?

#### (i) Outline

Having gained an idea of Macedon's internal stability (or rather the lack of it) in the period leading up to Philip's accession, one must now look at the multiple external threats that assailed Macedon following the major military defeat that brought about Philip's accession in 359 BC. According to Diodorus,

"The Macedonians had lost more than four thousand men in the battle, and the remainder, panic-stricken, had become exceedingly afraid of the Illyrian armies and lost heart for continuing the war. About the same time the Paeonians, who lived near Macedonia, began to pillage their territory, showing contempt for the Macedonians, and the Illyrians began to assemble large armies and prepare for an invasion of Macedonia, while a certain Pausanias, who was related to the royal line of Macedon, was planning with the aid of the Thracian king to join the contest for the throne of Macedon. Similarly, the Athenians too, being hostile to Philip, were endeavouring to restore Argaeus to the throne and had dispatched Mantias as general with three thousand hoplites and a considerable naval force."<sup>63</sup>

Philip thus faced four separate threats: the Illyrians, led by Bardylis, from the northwest; the Paeonians from the north; the Thracians from the east and the Athenians from the south. Diodorus' conclusion was that "the Macedonians, because of the disaster sustained in the battle and the magnitude of the dangers pressing upon them, were in the greatest perplexity," and most modern scholars have concurred. As A. B. Bosworth put it, "Philip came to power...when Macedon was threatened by dissolution, debilitated by a decade of dynastic feuding and crippled by military defeat at the hands of the Illyrians."<sup>64</sup> In this he is joined by, amongst others, G. T. Griffith – "Philip's future looked nearly hopeless" – J. R. Ellis – "Seldom can any state have so nearly approached total dismemberment without utterly disintegrating" – and N. G. L. Hammond – "the collapse of the Macedonian kingdom seemed to be almost inevitable."<sup>65</sup> However, within a year of becoming king, Philip had apparently rebuilt the supposedly shattered Macedonian army and seen off all

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<sup>63</sup> Diod. 16.2.5-6.

<sup>64</sup> Bosworth 1988, 6.

<sup>65</sup> Griffith 1979, 202; Ellis 1976, 44, cf. 1980, 36f; Hammond 1994, 22.

the threats.<sup>66</sup> Practically a miracle it would seem, but the question inevitably arises of whether the Illyrians, Paeonians, Athenians and Thracians really posed such severe threats to Macedon. Discerning this is best done by individually assessing each menace, and the way in which it was dealt with.

## (ii) The Athenian Threat

The pretender to the Macedonian throne, Argaeus, had most likely reigned briefly as a puppet king in the 380s.<sup>67</sup> His return was backed by 3,000 hoplites led by the Athenian general Mantias.<sup>68</sup> This was clearly a force to be respected; Macedon may have been able to see 4,000 fall against the Illyrians, but not without the remainder of the army becoming “panic-stricken, ... exceedingly afraid of the Illyrian armies and [losing] heart for continuing the war.”<sup>69</sup> However, as has been seen above, it is clear that Athenian interest was in the coastal city of Amphipolis.<sup>70</sup> Since it had revolted from Athenian rule in 424, the city had resisted all attempts to remove its independence. Although Amyntas III had recognised Athens’ claim to it in 371,<sup>71</sup> Perdiccas III had more recently sided with Amphipolis against Athens.<sup>72</sup> Significantly, Philip withdrew the garrison Perdiccas had placed in the city almost immediately after acceding to the throne:

“...when [Philip] observed that the Athenians were centring all their ambition upon recovering Amphipolis and for this reason were trying to bring Argaeus back to the throne, he voluntarily withdrew from the city, after first making it autonomous.”<sup>73</sup>

This was clearly a move intended to remove Athenian motivation for supporting Argaeus,<sup>74</sup> and one that may have worked; the Athenian general Mantias is reported as staying at Methone, leaving the pretender to approach Aegae with his

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<sup>66</sup> Griffith 1980, 58.

<sup>67</sup> See above, p18.

<sup>68</sup> Diod 16.2.6.

<sup>69</sup> Diod. 16.2.4-5.

<sup>70</sup> See above, p19-20, and below, Section II.

<sup>71</sup> Aesch. 2.32.

<sup>72</sup> In 364 Athens had seized Pydna, Methone, Potidaea and Torone (Dem. 4.4; Diod. 15.81.6) along the coast of the Thermaic Gulf, well inside Macedonian territory, as bases from which to operate against Macedon and the Chalcidian League. Cf. Griffith 1979, 186.

<sup>73</sup> Diod 16.3.3.

<sup>74</sup> Griffith 1980, 71; Worthington 2008, 24.

“mercenaries” (μισθοφόροι). The absence of the word ‘hoplites’ (ὀπλίται) which Mantias’ troops had previously been referred to as, is noticeable, and may well have been deliberate. It could well mean that Mantias had been ordered to refrain from engaging his troops, and they remained at Methone with him:<sup>75</sup>

“Mantias, the Athenian general, who had sailed into Methone, stayed behind there himself but sent Argaeus with his mercenaries to Aegae. And Argaeus approached the city and invited the population of Aegae to welcome his return and become the founders of his own kingship.”<sup>76</sup>

However, Demosthenes’ speech *Against Aristocrates* suggests otherwise:

“Take Philip, who is now accounted our very worst enemy. At the time when, having caught some of our citizens in the act of trying to restore Argaeus, he released them and made good all their losses, when he professed in a written message that he was ready to form an alliance with us, and to renew his ancestral amity.”<sup>77</sup>

If the men captured by Philip were citizens, they would have to have been Mantias’ hoplites rather than hired, non-citizen mercenaries. Demosthenes’ speech was delivered only seven years later, in 352, so for him to have made a mistake would seem unlikely. However, the apparent ease with which 3,000 men were defeated by Philip does not suggest their being all experienced, well-armed hoplites:

“When no-one paid any attention, [Argaeus] turned back to Methone, but Philip, who suddenly appeared with his soldiers, engaged him in battle, slew many of his mercenaries, and released under a truce the rest, who had fled for refuge to a certain hill, after he had first obtained from these the exiles, whom they delivered to him.”<sup>78</sup>

As a result one should consider the possibility that the description of the men as citizens was deliberately chosen by Demosthenes, despite being inaccurate, for greater impact on his audience. The alternative possibility is that the total force comprised a mix of hoplites and less experienced, non-Athenian mercenaries. Such a situation would suggest that Philip’s withdrawal from Amphipolis had no impact on Athenian policy. As a result, Mantias’ absence would presumably have been down to reasons that go unrecorded, but which were not a result of instructions from Athens.

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<sup>75</sup> Ellis 1976, 48.

<sup>76</sup> Diod. 16.3.5.

<sup>77</sup> Dem. 23.121.

<sup>78</sup> Diod. 16.3.6.

Ultimately, the matter delivers the same conclusion. If Athenian citizen forces were involved in the battle the ease with which they were defeated suggests that they were not a serious threat to Philip. If they were not involved, Athens must have been persuaded to decline further active involvement with Argeaus simply by Philip's withdrawal from Amphipolis. If the latter were the case Athens was presumably not that interested in seriously invading Macedon.

### (iii) The Paeonian Threat

"[Philip] sent an embassy to the Paeonians, and by corrupting some with gifts and persuading others by generous promises he made an agreement with them to maintain peace for the present."<sup>79</sup>

So says Diodorus. G. T. Griffith has argued that Philip cannot have possessed the financial reserves necessary to affect such bribery.<sup>80</sup> Such an idea has considerable merit. Much has been made, as will be seen below,<sup>81</sup> of Polyaeus' description of Philip's military reforms, which notably does not include the breastplate in a list of infantry armour:

"[Philip] made them take up their arms on march often 300 stades carrying helmet, shield, greaves, *sarissa* and in addition to their arms rations and all gear for day-to-day existence."<sup>82</sup>

This absence has commonly been put down by modern scholars to financial restrictions at the start of Philip's reign.<sup>83</sup> However, Diodorus previously notes that Philip "equipped the men appropriately with weapons of war" before training them extensively.<sup>84</sup> This apparently says much for the presumably poor state his army was in, but also suggests that Philip's coffers were not entirely empty. In addition, it has

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<sup>79</sup> Diod. 16.3.4. The king referred to is the Thracian Cotys, whose death soon after Philip's accession is attested by Ath. 6.248e and Theop. *FGrH* n. 115 F31.

<sup>80</sup> Griffith 1979, 210. estimates that "at least 100 to 200 talents apiece" would have been required to satisfy the Thracian and Paeonian kings. It does not seem an unreasonable figure, but there is little to go on to judge its accuracy.

<sup>81</sup> See Section III.

<sup>82</sup> Polyaeus. 4.2.10.

<sup>83</sup> See esp. Griffith 1979, 421f on the matter.

<sup>84</sup> Diod. 16.3.2.



been argued that the absence of breastplates was by no means uncommon. J. K. Anderson has suggested that the later fifth century saw a move towards a lighter, less tough hoplite cuirass or breastplate, and by the fourth many soldiers apparently wore none at all.<sup>85</sup>

Having said that, it is probable that Philip had little money available for bribery given Macedon's recent history. His predecessors had paid tribute to the Illyrians since the 390s<sup>86</sup> and it was not until 356 that Philip relieved the city of Crenides from Thracian siege and gained the 1,000 talents a year in gold that its mines provided.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, he did not gain access to the silver mines of Mt Pangaeum until late in the same year.<sup>88</sup> Coin hoards suggest that it was not until 356 that Philip coined gold and silver, presumably as a result of the above acquisitions.<sup>89</sup>

Based on this it would seem safe to assume that Philip was short of money in 359. However, there remains the question of how much bribing the Paeonians to prevent invasion would cost. To this there is simply no answer as a serious estimation of what the Paeonian king would demand cannot be made. There is a near total absence of information concerning Paeonian history and infrastructure. Indeed, nothing survives from the period of the Peloponnesian war to c. 360. Even thereafter, the only point worth noting is that following Philip's successful invasion in 358, the new Paeonian king, Lyceus,<sup>90</sup> was able to return to minting his own coins almost immediately.<sup>91</sup> This could be taken to indicate that the level of organisation that existed was enough to prevent a crisis-like defeat to Philip causing a lurch into tribal disunity, but little more.

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<sup>85</sup> Anderson 1970, 25f. Cf. Griffith 1979, 422f.

<sup>86</sup> Diod. 16.2.2.

<sup>87</sup> Diod. 16.8.6.

<sup>88</sup> The exact timing is uncertain as Diod. 16.3.7 mentions Philip's renaming the city of Crenides as Philippi in the context of 360/59, and 16.8.6 does so in 358/7. However, see Hammond 1994, 199 n. 21.

<sup>89</sup> Coins: Head 1979, 13.

<sup>90</sup> A coin from his name features the name 'ΛΥΚΚΕΙΟΥ' but an inscription from the same period spells it 'ΛΥΚΠΕΙΟΣ' *GHI* ii. 157.

<sup>91</sup> See *Revue Numismatique* (1897), 122f; *Zeichenschrift für Numismatik* 37 (1927), 228, 4, XI.3.

One can only say then that it would be extremely surprising if Philip had more or even the same amount to offer the Paeonians than they could gain from raiding and invasion. Consequently, the fact that the Paeonians were dissuaded from further attacks to those mentioned by Diodorus<sup>92</sup> raises the question of their motivation and capacity to make further inroads into Macedon. In 358, not long after making arrangements with Philip, the Paeonian king Agis died:

“Now that [Philip] was relieved of the war with the Athenians and had information that the king of the Paeonians, Agis, was dead, he conceived that he had the opportunity to attack the Paeonians. Accordingly, having conducted an expedition into Paeonia and defeated the barbarians in a battle, he compelled the tribe to acknowledge allegiance to the Macedonians.”<sup>93</sup>

For the Paeonians to be defeated so simply by an army still feeling the impact of its defeat in 359 would suggest that they were not particularly well organised internally and their forces not exceptionally strong.<sup>94</sup> Diodorus mentions that Paeonian cavalry formed part of the forces that were taken to Asia by Alexander.<sup>95</sup> Given their ‘specialist’ nature, it would seem fair to assume that such troops were picked on the basis of exceptional ability,<sup>96</sup> but the cursory nature of Diodorus’ description of Philip’s victory in 358 prevents any confirmation of this. It is worth noting that upon Perdiccas’ death in 359, the Paeonians “began to pillage [Macedonian] territory, showing contempt for the Macedonians”<sup>97</sup> rather than launching a more serious invasion. This could be seen to indicate a disinterest in serious expansion; it is even possible that Agis’ death in 358 was the result of old age or medical complications that prevented a greater level of activity the year before.

The absence of evidence about the precise nature of Paeonian military strength and concerns prevents a conclusion either way, but the result is ultimately the same; either way the Paeonians would seemingly not have presented a serious

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<sup>92</sup> Diod. 16.3.3.

<sup>93</sup> Diod. 16.4.2.

<sup>94</sup> Errington 1990, 41 views the victory as being “conducted like a military exercise.”

<sup>95</sup> Diod. 17.17.4.

<sup>96</sup> Griffith 1979, 213.

<sup>97</sup> Diod. 16.2.5.

threat to Macedon.<sup>98</sup> The raids would have undoubtedly been a problem, and one more challenging to deal with due to the recent setback suffered by the Macedonian army. It was to prevent these that Philip used what money he had for bribes. However, bribery was not a viable long-term policy and with the spectre of genuine invasion looming elsewhere, it would surely have been a case of finding the best short-term solution to the Paeonian raiding so that Macedonian attention could be turned fully to the more serious threats at hand. Once (if!) these were dealt with the matter of the Paeonians could be returned to. Agis of course died soon afterwards, offering the chance for Philip to deal with it swiftly and permanently.

#### (iv) The Thracian Threat

Diodorus states that upon Peridccas' death the Thracians, like the Athenians, supported a pretender to the Macedonian throne.<sup>99</sup> The pretender was one Pausanias, almost certainly the same man who had tried and failed to seize the throne in 368 with backing from the Chalcidian League.<sup>100</sup> Philip

“...prevented the return of Pausanias by winning over with gifts the king who was on the point of attempting [Pausanias'] restoration”<sup>101</sup>

The king in question is most likely Cotys I, whose assassination very soon after Philip's accession is attested elsewhere.<sup>102</sup> Upon his death, apparently at the hands of vengeance-driven Greeks, Thrace was divided between his son, Cersobleptes, and two others, Amadocus and Berisades.<sup>103</sup> Whatever negotiations or actions took place between the new rulers and Philip is unknown, but the result was presumably a peace agreement of some kind between Thrace and Macedon, as no further conflict is mentioned.

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<sup>98</sup> Ellis 1976, 57.

<sup>99</sup> Diod. 16.2.6.

<sup>100</sup> Aesch. 2.28f; Diod. 14.89.2.

<sup>101</sup> Diod. 16.3.4.

<sup>102</sup> Ath. 248e; Dem. 23.8, 183; Theop. *FGrH* n. 115 F 31 (J).

<sup>103</sup> Dem. 23.8, 183

This would suggest that Thrace presented no real threat to Macedon, but it must be remembered that prior to 359 the kingdom was one of considerable size and strength. The Odrysian Cotys apparently inherited control of the region's other southeastern tribes between the Greek colony of Apollonia, on the Black Sea coast, and the Chersonese around c. 385.<sup>104</sup> By 359 he had expanded his territory up to the R. Hebrus' eastern bank, gained control of the entire Pontic seaboard and pushed north in the Odessan interior.<sup>105</sup>

Described by one historian as "the most vigorous, skilful and astute of fourth-century Odrysian rulers,"<sup>106</sup> he was clearly a strong and capable monarch, and one that would surely have presented a serious threat in 359. However, despite presumably being able to back Pausanias with considerable military force, Cotys was apparently dissuaded from doing so by Macedonian bribes. Consequently, his commitment to Pausanias' cause must be questioned. As has already been discussed, Macedon's likely financial state means it is difficult to see how Philip could have been able to stop Paeonian raids by bribery, assuming the latter presented a genuine threat.<sup>107</sup> That he could have bought off the considerably larger and more united Thracian kingdom seems by extension impossible. In such circumstances one is left to assume that Cotys was simply not very interested in gaining control of Macedon, or felt doing so unnecessarily difficult. His untimely death prevents any conclusions being reached, but it may be that Cotys preferred to take whatever the Macedonians could offer him to not subject them to raids, invasion and other such troubles. This could have been inspired by his advanced age, but given Macedon's history of internal and external problems throughout the fourth century, he could have expected to enjoy such an arrangement for the foreseeable future.

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<sup>104</sup> Dem. 23.129; Theop. *FGrH* 115 F 31; Nep. Iphic. 2.1 record the Athenian general Iphicrates marrying Cotys' daughter in c. 386, suggesting he was either king already, or close to becoming so.

<sup>105</sup> Dem. 23.181f; school. Aesch. 2.81; Str. 7. F 78.

<sup>106</sup> Archibald 1994, 460.

<sup>107</sup> See above, p 13.

## (v) The Illyrian Threat

“The fears of what might have come from Paeonia and Thrace were as nothing compared with the fear of what the Illyrians might do,” wrote G. T. Griffith.<sup>108</sup> Certainly, of all the peoples threatening Macedon in 359, the Illyrians were unquestionably the strongest. Philip’s accession was a direct result of the heavy defeat they had inflicted on his predecessor, Perdiccas, a defeat that saw 4,000 Macedonians dead alongside their king.<sup>109</sup> The Illyrian king, Bardylis, had previously led major incursions into Macedon on several occasions, notably 393/2 and 383/2.<sup>110</sup> Perdiccas’ predecessor, Amyntas, had been forced to abandon his kingdom on both occasions. In light of this, the matter requiring investigation is why Bardylis did not follow up his victory in 359 by invading Macedon as soon as possible.

One should immediately recognize that the absence of any exploitation by the Illyrians of their victory could have been caused by internal problems that went unrecorded. G. T. Griffith has suggested Bardylis’ age as a potential factor<sup>111</sup> – he had been king for over forty years at this point – as he might have lacked the drive for further conflict after a life of campaigning. Given that he led the Illyrian army against Philip in 358 without any apparent difficulty however, this seems hard to credit.

The alternative is that he was somehow forestalled. No record exists of a treaty being signed between the Macedonians and Illyrians, but it is surely to be expected that Philip attempted to negotiate following the disaster of 359. However, that he managed to draw such talks out for over a year against an Illyrian force eager for further success beggars belief, especially as given the Illyrian and Macedonian positions, the former could essentially dictate terms to the latter, and demand their

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<sup>108</sup> Griffith 1979, 211. Cf. Hammond 1980a, 53.

<sup>109</sup> Diod. 16.2.5.

<sup>110</sup> 393/2: Diod. 14.92.3. 383/2: Diod. 15.19.2; Isoc. 6.46.

<sup>111</sup> Griffith 1979, 211.

swift acceptance or face invasion. For Bardylis to have waited so long, one of three situations must have occurred.

Firstly, it could be that Bardylis was confident enough in his position to either allow himself to deal with other unrecorded matters, or at least to take his time deciding how to act further against Macedon. As we have seen, however, no comment can be made on the question of Illyrian domestic affairs other than to say that there is nothing to suggest that any such matters were pressing on Bardylis before then.

Secondly, an alliance of some kind could have been arranged. Philip's first marriage occurred early in his reign and was to one Audata, an Illyrian.<sup>112</sup> It seems safe to presume that this arrangement was a political one, made in connection with Philip's conflict with Bardylis. One assumption would be that the union occurred to secure the treaty that followed Philip's victory against Bardylis in 358.<sup>113</sup> However, J. R. Ellis has suggested that the marriage instead followed Perdiccas' defeat and formed part of a deal brokered by Philip in its aftermath.<sup>114</sup> One cannot be certain either way given the vague dating, but there is no inherent reason why this could not have been the situation.

One might ask why Bardylis should seek such an arrangement only to return to conflict so soon afterwards, as if he always sought the latter delaying brought no benefit. There can have been little to attract Bardylis to such a prospect if he was eager to benefit fully from his victory over Perdiccas. He had yet to add any serious booty or territory to that which he already held, and as things stood he seemingly had the whole of Macedon open to him. Philip's and Bardylis' meeting in battle in 358 was in fact triggered by the former's invasion of the latter's territory; not, as might be expected, the other way around. For Bardylis to have to accepted terms

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<sup>112</sup> Ath. 13.557b.

<sup>113</sup> On the treaty Diod. 16.8.1.

<sup>114</sup> Ellis 1976, 47, cf 1980, 38. Errington 1990, 41 follows this, and Worthington 2008, 23f also recognises the possibility.

would indicate only one thing; that he was disinterested in further territorial advance.

Such a lack of interest in further acquisition of territory forms the third possible situation; that even if the marriage did not occur until after Bardylis' defeat, the king was not interested in expansion into Macedon. By 359 Bardylis already effectively controlled all of Illyria and Upper Macedonia, a considerable amount of territory. In addition, he had received a steady flow of tribute from the part of Macedon that remained independent since the reign of Amyntas.<sup>115</sup> When Philip advanced on Bardylis in 358, the king's initial response was to offer peace, with both sides retaining control of what they already held.<sup>116</sup> Such actions are surely not the behaviour of one who is interested in expansion, especially as Philip's position could not have improved so dramatically as to have overturned Bardylis' military advantage.<sup>117</sup> Indeed, R. M. Errington has interpreted the Illyrian king's response as one caught "wholly unprepared" by a disruption to the existing arrangements.<sup>118</sup>

It would seem then that disinterest in expansion was the most likely reason for there being no Illyrian invasion. A king who was intent on a full-scale invasion and with so overwhelmingly strong a position as Bardylis would surely not wait so long to follow up such a crushing victory like that of 359, even if other business were pressing him. He would certainly not make offers of peace when opposed by an enemy he had already defeated once. Bardylis was an old man by the start of Philip's reign, in control of considerable territory and receiving regular tribute from Macedon. He would presumably have expected his victory in 359 to have confirmed this, and with such a situation in place, further territorial expansion was probably judged unnecessary.

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<sup>115</sup> Diod. 16.2.2; Just. 7.5.1.

<sup>116</sup> Diod. 16.4.4.

<sup>117</sup> *Contra* Hammond 1994, 26.

<sup>118</sup> Errington 1990, 41.

It should be said that such a conclusion might not have been Philip's upon becoming king. With such a major defeat suffered so recently, and Macedon so exposed, Illyrian invasion would probably have seemed inevitable. In such circumstances, negating 'lesser' threats from elsewhere as swiftly as possible would have been the most natural move.<sup>119</sup>

#### (vi) Summary of Findings

The threats facing Philip in 359 certainly give the impression of utmost severity. They would undoubtedly have seemed so to Philip. However, the relative ease with which the Paeonian and Thracian threats were apparently nullified, with financial incentives that cannot have been hugely impressive, does not enhance this view. Similarly, that Philip apparently persuaded Athens to withdraw support for Pausanias simply by removing the Macedonian garrison from Amphipolis suggests the city's commitment to the pretender's cause was not as strong as it might have been. Such judgements are of course made with hindsight; it must be assumed that Philip could not have known how successful such measures would be against opposition which could seemingly take by force far more than he was offering.

Philip was also undoubtedly aided by the timely deaths of the Paeonian and Thracian kings, Agis and Cotys. The internal distractions that these events would have caused – especially in the case of Cotys, who was murdered – would have distracted from any possible exploitation of Macedon's vulnerability in the short term. Philip was also fortunate that no further Illyrian incursion followed Bardylis' victory in 359. It may be that Philip was able to bring about a treaty with the Illyrian king; if so however, it only demonstrates Bardylis' disinterest in further expansion more than it does any influence Philip had.

However, Philip's achievement in managing all the above, even if he was fortunate in some respects, should not be underplayed. To persuade any force which

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<sup>119</sup> Worthington 2008, 25.



has the potential to inflict great damage on you to accept bribes or tribute smaller than what they could most likely take from you by force is no mean feat. In addition, his defeat of Bardylis in 358 was without doubt an exceptional accomplishment. The effect of Perdiccas' defeat must have been dramatic, and due to the loss of 4,000 men with him, a significant proportion of Philip's army must have had little or no training or argument. To rally such a force to emerge victorious against a force that was far more confident and better practised demonstrates huge ability and powers of organisation and generalship.

#### IV. Military Genius?

Philip has frequently been credited with creating a new Macedonian army, and introducing various innovations in weaponry and armour to make it the premier fighting force in the ancient world. The lack of source material for the Macedonian army during Philip's reign makes assessing to what degree such praise is justified difficult. That change occurred in some areas is clear; surviving military statistics from the start of Philip and Alexander's reigns suggest considerable enlargement, as will be seen, and several units present in the latter's army were most likely introduced or reformed by Philip. Beyond this matters are less certain as information for earlier military matters is fragmentary at best, and for the majority of Philip's reign, almost entirely absent. Therefore, this section will seek to assess firstly the impact Philip had on the size of the Macedonian army; secondly, his effect on its professionalism and organisation; and lastly, his most celebrated innovation, the sarissa.

##### (i) Numbers

In 358 Philip defeated Bardylis with a force of 10,000 infantry and 600 cavalry, presumably the largest force he could possibly have assembled.<sup>120</sup> The previous year Perdiccas had died alongside 4,000 of his men. No further figures survive for Macedonian contingents of Philip's armies during his reign.<sup>121</sup> Consequently, the first indication of Philip's improvements to the Macedonian military's size is the description of the force Alexander crossed to Asia with in 334. According to Diodorus:

"There were found to be, of infantry, twelve thousand Macedonians, seven thousand allies, and five thousand mercenaries, all of whom were under the command of Parmenio. Odrysians, Triballians, and Illyrians accompanied him to the number of seven thousand; and of archers and the so-called Agrianians one thousand, making up a total of thirty-two thousand foot soldiers. Of cavalry there were eighteen hundred

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<sup>120</sup> Diod. 16.4.3.

<sup>121</sup> Worthington 2008, 26 cites the "more than 20,000 foot and 3,000 horse" mentioned by Diod. 16.35.4-5 for Philip's forces at the Battle of the Crocus Field in 352, but this is incorrect as Diodorus states that such numbers included allied Thessalian forces.

Macedonians, commanded by Philotas son of Parmenio; eighteen hundred Thessalians, commanded by Calas son of Harpalus; six hundred from the rest of Greece under the command of Erigyius; and nine hundred Thracian and Paeonian scouts with Cassander in command, making a total of forty-five hundred cavalry. These were the men who crossed with Alexander to Asia.”<sup>122</sup>

An immediately noticeable point is the inaccuracy of Diodorus’ calculation of the total cavalry. He describes contingents totaling 5,100, but includes a total count of only 4,500. This could well be dismissed as a simple error, but other sources’ descriptions make the matter more complicated. Justin offers a total of 32,000 infantry and 4,500 cavalry.<sup>123</sup> Given that Diodorus’ 30,000 foot is conveniently neat, and so very possibly rounded down, this is essentially an identical count, so very likely from the same source. Thus more significant is the account of Arrian, who agrees that the infantry comprised “not much more than” 30,000, but reports that there were slightly over 5,000 cavalry.<sup>124</sup> In addition, Plutarch mentions that in their various histories, Aristobulus claimed 30,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry crossed with Alexander, Ptolemy offered 30,000 and 5,000 (thus very likely making him Arrian’s source) and Anaximenes 43,000 and 5,500.<sup>125</sup> Finally, Polybius reports that Callisthenes’ account offered 40,000 and 4,500.<sup>126</sup>

Thus there are disparities between both infantry and cavalry numbers that are simply too large to be dismissed as errors. Regarding cavalry, the exceptions are the higher counts of 5,000+ by Arrian and Ptolemy and the accumulated 5,100 of Diodorus’ description. Concerning infantry, Callisthenes’ 40,000 and Aristobulus’ 43,000 are the anomalies. Making sense of this is difficult. P. A. Brunt has made the point that Anaximenes and Callisthenes’ being contemporaries of the events makes their infantry figures most likely. If they had any agenda, it would be to understate the size of Alexander’s forces to make his achievements all the more impressive, but they offer numbers at least 10,000 higher than all other accounts.<sup>127</sup> This argument has definite value, but it should be remembered that Ptolemy and Aristobulus were

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<sup>122</sup> Diod. 17.17.3-4.

<sup>123</sup> Just. 11.6.2.

<sup>124</sup> Arr. 1.11.3.

<sup>125</sup> Plut. *De Fort. Aut. Virt. Alex.* 1.3.327d-e, cf. *Alex.* 15.2.

<sup>126</sup> Call. *FGrH* n. 124 F35 = Polyb. 12.19.1.

<sup>127</sup> Brunt 1963, 33.

also contemporaries of the events they describe, and Brunt's argument on its own is not enough to justify following Anaximenes and Callisthenes outright.

If one assumes that the figure of 40,000 offered by Callisthenes, and the 30,000 of Diodorus, Aristobulus, and most likely Ptolemy have been rounded down from 43,000 and 32,000 respectively, the difference in the accounts is 11,000 infantry. This is a sensible step as the former figures are suspiciously generalised, whereas the latter suggest greater specificity. Assuming this, a clue to explaining the 11,000-strong disparity can be found in the terms in which the various authors present their figures. Diodorus and Arrian both state explicitly that their statistics refer to the party that crossed to Asia with Alexander. As Justin most likely used the same source as Diodorus, it would seem likely that his totals refer to the same force. Similarly, if Ptolemy's account is the ultimate source of Arrian's figure, it must also have referred to the army that crossed in 334. However, another force had already crossed to Asia in 336, led by Attalus, Parmenio, Amyntas and Calas.<sup>128</sup> This advance party was estimated by Polyaeus to have been 10,000 strong.<sup>129</sup> Brunt has thus posited that the figures of Callisthenes and Aristobulus included this advance party.<sup>130</sup> Frustratingly, this theory cannot be confirmed as the context of Callisthenes and Aristobulus' numbers has been lost, and the activities and fate of the advance party go almost completely unrecorded.<sup>131</sup> However, in addition to the comfortable fit its alleged numbers make with the difference in infantry figures discussed above – 10,000 again suggests a rounded off figure, and could very likely have actually been the 11,000 required – facts would appear to point to an absorption of the advance force into the 334 army. The only alternative to such incorporation is that the party was recalled back to Macedon before Alexander's crossing, and thereafter formed either part of the army described by Diodorus, or that which remained in Macedon under Antipater. Withdrawal seems unlikely, as the force is recorded as active in Asia

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<sup>128</sup> Just. 11.5.8 (Amyntas); Diod. 16.91.2, 17.2.4f, 5.1-2 (Parmenio and Attalus); 17.7.10 (Calas, in 335).

<sup>129</sup> Polyaeus. 5.44.4, cf. Diod. 16.91.2; Just. 9.5.8-9.

<sup>130</sup> Brunt. 1963, 34f.

<sup>131</sup> Diod. 16.91.2 briefly refers to its activities shortly before Alexander's arrival in Asia.

not long before Alexander's arrival.<sup>132</sup> Also, although the fall of Attalus<sup>133</sup> may well be seen as a trigger for the force being recalled, and Parmenio apparently withdrew to Macedon upon Philip's death and returned to Asia in 334,<sup>134</sup> Amyntas and Calas remained to command it. Given this, there seems to be no obvious reason to assume that the force must have returned home if one or both men were removed or recalled.<sup>135</sup>

If this interpretation is correct, this would mean that Alexander's army comprised approximately 42-43,000 infantry. The exact Macedonian contingent cannot be determined as the makeup of the advance party goes unrecorded, but apparently involved at least the 12,000 mentioned by Diodorus. A. B. Bosworth has argued that the proportion of Macedonians in the advance force would surely not have been greater than that of the main force of 334.<sup>136</sup> If this is accepted, approximately 3,000 men should be added to the Macedonian infantry total.

Assuming this was the situation, what of the cavalry? One cannot rely on Callisthenes and Aristobulus in the same way, as the former offers a total of 4,500, and the latter only 4,000 (surely rounded down). As already mentioned, Justin and Diodorus also offer totals of 4,500, though the latter individual counts total 5,100. Arrian and Ptolemy offer in excess of 5,000 and Anaximenes 5,500. Given the detailed description Diodorus offers of Alexander's army of 334, it is harder to accept his, and therefore others', lower figure of 4,500 over the cumulative total of 5,100. It has already been stated that Justin and Diodorus could very likely share a source given the similarity of their infantry and cavalry totals. As Callisthenes offers an identical cavalry count, Brunt has argued that he was the source in question.<sup>137</sup> Diodorus' discrepancy could, in Brunt's view, be a result of Callisthenes accidentally omitting a unit in his count, which presumably did not include a breakdown of all the

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<sup>132</sup> Diod. 16.91.2.

<sup>133</sup> See below, pp109-13.

<sup>134</sup> Diod. 17.16.2 has him advising Alexander to produce an heir before setting out to Asia; Arr. 1.11.6 has Alexander entrusting him with aspects of the crossing from Macedon.

<sup>135</sup> Brunt 1963, 34.

<sup>136</sup> Bosworth 1986, 2-3.

<sup>137</sup> Brunt 1963, 33f.

units. Having taken his incorrect total, Diodorus used a second source for a detailed description of all the units, and failed to recognise the difference in the totals that resulted.<sup>138</sup>

Unfortunately this is merely conjecture, though in the absence of suitable alternative explanations it does appear to be the most acceptable possibility. However, the matter of Anaximenes' count of 5,500 remains. If the above interpretation of Alexander's infantry is correct, 5,500 must surely include the cavalry of both the crossing force and advance party. However, if the total for the former alone is 5,100, as suggested above, this would mean the latter's horse numbered only 400. As a proportion of 10,000, this is simply too small a total.<sup>139</sup> In explaining this, a clue may be found in the following details. Plutarch claims that at the Battle of the Granicus River in 331:

"When Parmenio advised him against risking the crossing [of the Granicus] at such a late hour in the day, Alexander declared that the Hellespont would blush for shame if, once he had crossed it, he should shrink back from the Granicus; then he immediately plunged into the stream with 13 squadrons (*ilai*) of cavalry."<sup>140</sup>

However, at the Battle of Gaugamela three years later, Arrian states that the Companion cavalry was divided into only eight squadrons.<sup>141</sup> This inconsistency is apparently explained in his version of the events at the Granicus though, where Alexander:

"...commanded Amyntas, son of Arrhabaeus, to make the first rush into the river at the head of the skirmishing cavalry (*prodromoi*), the Paeonians, and one regiment of infantry."<sup>142</sup>

Thus it can be argued that Plutarch's 13 squadrons were in fact Arrian's eight *ilai* of Companion cavalry, plus one of Paeonian light cavalry<sup>143</sup> and therefore four of *prodromoi*. Brunt has posited that given their being mentioned with and frequent

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<sup>138</sup> Brunt 1963, 33f.

<sup>139</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 16.2.

<sup>141</sup> Arr. 3.11.8.

<sup>142</sup> Arr. 1.14.6.

<sup>143</sup> Given Diod. 17.17.4's description of "900 Thracian and Paeonian scouts" it is difficult to see how there could have been more than a single unit's worth of Paeonians present.

positioning close to the Companions in battle,<sup>144</sup> these *prodromoi* must have been Macedonian.<sup>145</sup> This is most likely correct, as the units of light cavalry described by Diodorus are explicitly stated to be Paeonian and Thracian.<sup>146</sup> This therefore demands that the *prodromoi* were already in Asia with the advance party. However, Arrian's division of 1,800 Companion cavalry into eight *ilai* would give 225 in each. As a similar set up would surely have been in place for lighter cavalry, the four *ilai* of *prodromoi* would presumably be around 900 strong, more than twice the 400 Anaximenes' cavalry count of 5,500 allows for. Once again one is reduced to pure conjecture, but it could be that, like Callisthenes, Anaximenes inadvertently omitted a unit from his total cavalry count. If this were the 500 required to meet the expected 900 *prodromoi*, this would mean Alexander's total cavalry numbered approximately 6,000, 1,800 of which were Macedonian Companions and 900 of which were Macedonian *prodromoi*.<sup>147</sup>

If the above interpretations are followed, it would seem that Philip took an army that in 359 comprised 10,000 Macedonian infantry and 600 cavalry and enlarged it so that in 334 his son could take 15,000 infantry and 2,700 cavalry to Asia. To this must also be added the forces left behind:

"The soldiers who were left behind in Europe under the command of Antipater numbered twelve thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse."<sup>148</sup>

This would mean that during his reign Philip enlarged his infantry to 27,000, a 270% increase, and his cavalry to 4,200, a 700% increase.<sup>149</sup> This is not all however, as the important matters of losses and reinforcements must be considered.

Calculating losses to Alexander's armies during his reign is exceedingly difficult. The sources rarely offer any figures, and whenever Alexander is present in a

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<sup>144</sup> Mentioning with Companions: Arr. 1.12.7, 14.1.6, 2.9.2, 3.12.3, 18.2, 20.1, 21.2. Stationing near Companions: 1.14.6 (Granicus), 2.9.2 (Issus), 3.12.3 (Gaugamela).

<sup>145</sup> Brunt 1963, 35f.

<sup>146</sup> Diod. 17.17.3-4.

<sup>147</sup> Brunt 1963, 35f.

<sup>148</sup> Diod. 17.17.5.

<sup>149</sup> Griffith 1980, 59 follows Diod. 17.17 in calculating "24,000 or more [infantry] + 3,300 cavalry...in the year 334," and is joined in this by Ellis 1980, 40.

situation, they are always very low.<sup>150</sup> However, various references indicate that losses off the battlefield must have been significant. Arrian makes multiple references to the hardship suffered by the Macedonian armies, describing “scarcity of provisions”, “severe hardship” and forced marches.”<sup>151</sup> His description of the crossing of the Gedrosian desert in particular strongly suggests heavy casualties:

“Alexander then advanced towards the capital of the Gedrosians...Most of the historians of Alexander’s reign assert that all the hardships which his army suffered in Asia were not worthy of comparison with the labours undergone here...The scorching heat and lack of water destroyed a great part of the army, and especially the beasts of burden; most of which perished from thirst and some of them even from the depth and heat of the sand, because it had been thoroughly scorched by the sun. For they met with lofty ridges of deep sand, not closely pressed and hardened, but such as received those who stepped upon it just as if they were stepping into mud, or rather into untrodden snow...The soldiers killed many of the beasts of burden of their own accord...they ate the flesh of these, and said that they had died of thirst or had perished from the heat...The consequence was that it was no longer easy to convey the soldiers who were suffering from disease, or those who were left behind on the roads on account of the heat...Thus some were left behind along the roads on account of sickness, others from fatigue or the effects of the heat, or from not being able to bear up against the drought; and there was no one either to lead them or to remain and tend them in their sickness. Most of them perished in the sand, like men getting out of the course at sea. Another calamity also befell the army...On one occasion, when the army bivouacked, for the sake of its water, near a small brook which was a winter torrent, about the second watch of the night the brook which flowed there was suddenly swelled by the rains in the mountains which had fallen unperceived by the soldiers. The torrent advanced with so great a flood as to destroy most of the wives and children of the men who followed the army, and to sweep away all the royal baggage as well as all the beasts of burden still remaining. The soldiers, after great exertions, were hardly able to save themselves together with their weapons, many of which they lost beyond recovery.”<sup>152</sup>

Curtius also relates a desert crossing to the River Oxus, where:

“Some men gulped water down too greedily and died from blockage of the windpipe – and the number of these exceeded the numbers Alexander had lost in any battle.”<sup>153</sup>

However, as such descriptions are rare and do not permit any meaningful calculation, one is better served by examining the various bodies of reinforcements sent out to Asia, to which multiple references are made.

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<sup>150</sup> Macedonian losses at the Battle of the Granicus (334), for example, were varyingly recorded as nine infantry and 25 cavalry (Plut. Alex. 16.15), nine infantry and 120 cavalry (Just. 11.6.12), and around 85 cavalry and 30 infantry (Arr. 1.16.4). At the Battle of Issus the Macedonians apparently lost only 32 foot and 150 horse (Cirt. 3.11.27), or 130 and 150 (Just. 11.9.10). Gaugamela saw losses of either 100 (Arr. 3.15.6), fewer than 300 (Curt. 4.16.26) or 500 (Diod. 17.61.3) Macedonians in total.

<sup>151</sup> Arr. 3.20.1, 28.1, 28.8., 4.21 and 23.

<sup>152</sup> Arr. 6.24-5.

<sup>153</sup> Curt. 7.5.15.



The first such force was apparently dispatched from Macedon almost immediately after the main body of 334 had reached Asia. Arrian reports that newly married soldiers were allowed to return to Macedon on leave during the winter of 334/3 whilst the rest of the army wintered near Gordium, and returned in the spring with 3,000 more infantry and 300 cavalry.<sup>154</sup> The matter is confused however, by Polybius, quoting Callisthenes, also noting that “when he was on the point of invading Cilicia,” Alexander received further reinforcement, this time of 5,000 infantry and 800 cavalry. It would seem that both reports are differing versions of the same event, as Arrian’s report is in the context of Alexander’s being in Phrygia, just before he enters Cappadocia, from which he swiftly moves on to Cilicia.<sup>155</sup> In addition, Curtius notes that the command of “the troops that had recently arrived from Macedonia” was given to Calas, “while Alexander himself made for Cappadocia.”<sup>156</sup> Brunt has argued otherwise, suggesting that Callisthenes’ figures were an amalgam of Arrian’s reinforcements and a second force of 2,000 foot and 500 horse.<sup>157</sup> Whilst this explains the difference in figures, it is hard to believe that a second group of reinforcements would have been dispatched so soon after the first. Callisthenes’ being part of the expedition would seem to make his account more reliable, there is no reason for him to invent or exaggerate his figures.<sup>158</sup> Arrian’s forces were presumably a misinterpretation or textual corruption.

The next reference to reinforcements sees one Amyntas, son of Andromedes, being sent back to Macedon to recruit more troops and returning in summer 331 with 6,000 Macedonian and 7,500 allied infantry, and 500 Macedonian and 980 allied cavalry.<sup>159</sup> That he was dispatched over dangerous winter seas suggests that Alexander was in desperate need of such men.<sup>160</sup> Thereafter no Macedonian reinforcements are recorded; it may be that they occurred, but went unmentioned

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<sup>154</sup> Arr. 1.29.4.

<sup>155</sup> Phrygia: Arr. 1.29 and 2.3; Cappadocia and entry into Cilicia: 2.4.

<sup>156</sup> Curt. 1.24. *Contra* Bosworth 1986, 6, which sees Curtius’ reference as being to a separate force. However, there is no reason to assume this.

<sup>157</sup> Brunt 1963, 36-7.

<sup>158</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> Curt. 4.6.30, Diod. 17.49.1 (mission); Curt. 5.1.40-2, Diod. 17.65.1 (numbers). Cf Arr. 3.16.10, which does not give any numbers.

<sup>160</sup> Bosworth 1986, 6.

by the sources. However, Bosworth has pointed to the fact that the subsequent recruitment of mercenary forces from both Greece and Asia is mentioned,<sup>161</sup> and argued that the vast majority of Macedonian troops were already in Asia by 331.<sup>162</sup> In support of this, when King Agis of Sparta rebelled in 331/0, captured several Greek cities and besieged Megalopolis, Antipater is recorded as being forced to mobilise an army in response,<sup>163</sup> and seemingly had to rely heavily on recently levied Greek mercenaries.<sup>164</sup> Similarly, upon the renewal of rebellion in Greece in 323, Antipater could mobilise on 13,000 infantry and 600 cavalry in response, with most likely only part of the former being Macedonian.<sup>165</sup> A lack of Macedonian troops is further suggested by Antipater's defeat at Lamia shortly after entering Greece, which resulted in his being besieged in the city until relieved by the Phrygian satrap Leonnatus.<sup>166</sup>

Perhaps the most important reference to post-331 reinforcements refers to an event in 324. After facing revolt from his army at Opis, Alexander released a large group of his troops from service. The exact number is uncertain, as at one point Diodorus offers a figure of 10,000, of which 6,000 "had crossed into Asia with Alexander." Later however, he says the forces numbered "more than 10,000". Arrian agrees with the latter total, and Justin offers 11,000.<sup>167</sup> In his later reference, Diodorus also states that the returning force included 1,500 cavalry, so it may well be that the infantry numbered 10,000, with some cavalry also demobbed.<sup>168</sup> The total recorded horse sent to Asia by 331 numbered 3,100, so if further reinforcements were not sent, practically half this number were being sent back to

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<sup>161</sup> In 330, the Alexander's allied infantry was dispatched along the Cilician coast (Arr. 3.19.5-6; Diod. 17.74.3-4) and returned two years later with additional mercenary forces (Arr. 4.7.2; Curt. 7.10.11-12). Around the same time Antipater sent 8,000 "Greeks", including 600 cavalry. In 329 a group of Macedonian veterans were sent back to Macedon (Arr. 3.29.5) and returned three years later with 30,000 infantry and 6,000 cavalry, described as "allies and mercenaries from Greece" (Diod 17.95.4).

<sup>162</sup> Bosworth 1986, 8.

<sup>163</sup> Aesch. 3.165

<sup>164</sup> Diod. 17.63.1.

<sup>165</sup> Diod. 18.12.2 refers to all the troops as 'Macedonians', but this is surely an error or meant as a general term, as it is difficult to see why Antipater could not have had such troops available to him in 331. In addition, Diodorus notes that "Macedonia was short of citizen soldiers because of the number of those who had been sent to Asia as replacements for the army."

<sup>166</sup> Diod. 18.12.4-13.3 (defeat and siege), 14.5 (Leonnatus being sent for and arriving).

<sup>167</sup> Arr. 7.8.1, 12.1-4; Diod. 17.109.1, 18.4.1, 12.1, 16.4; Just. 12.12.7.

<sup>168</sup> Bosworth 1986, 3.

Macedon in 324. Once losses and garrisoning are taken into account, Alexander cannot have had any cavalry left with him under such circumstances. For the same reasons it is similarly hard to believe that any infantry remained once 10,000 were demobbed.

This clashes directly with the claim Curtius makes that Alexander planned to keep a force of 13,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry with him to maintain control in Asia.<sup>169</sup> As Brunt and Griffith have argued, this must refer to Macedonian troops, as the total allied Greek and Balkan forces sent to Asia far exceeded such figures, and cannot feasibly have dropped so low, even with heavy losses. Equally, they cannot be oriental forces, as access to such men was essentially unlimited.<sup>170</sup> Brunt feels that Curtius must be referring to a number of troops ordered by Alexander following the discharge of 324. Whilst this would seem the most acceptable explanation, it is difficult to accept that Alexander had no Macedonian troops left following 324, as the above analysis would suggest. In fact, several references suggest otherwise. In 323 Alexander apparently combined 20,000 newly levied Persian infantry with surviving Macedonians “so that in each company there were twelve Persians and four Macedonians.”<sup>171</sup> This shows Alexander to be low on, but not completely lacking Macedonian forces, as a ratio of 3:1 would mean the presence of 6,700 Macedonians.<sup>172</sup> In addition, in describing the events that followed Alexander’s death, Diodorus refers several times to a 3,000-strong elite infantry unit known as the ‘Silver Shields.’ Clearly having been with Alexander from the start of his reign – in 318 “the youngest...were about 60 years old, most of the others about seventy, and some even older” – their continued presence confirms that Alexander did not discharge all his remaining Macedonian forces in 324.<sup>173</sup>

If the army of 334 comprised 15,000 Macedonian infantry (12,000 in the crossing force, 3,000 from the advance party), and they received only two groups of

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<sup>169</sup> Curt. 10.2.19.

<sup>170</sup> Brunt 1963, 38f; Griffith 1965, 131.

<sup>171</sup> Arr. 7.23.3-4.

<sup>172</sup> Bosworth 1986, 3.

<sup>173</sup> Diod. 18.58.1, 19.28.1, 30.6, 41.2.

reinforcements, of 5,000 in 334 (assuming Callisthenes' figure is correct rather than Arrian's) and 6,000 in 331, the total is 29,000. If one subtracts from this the 10,000 who were discharged, the 6,700 who were combined with the newly recruited 20,000 Persians, and the 3,000 'Silver Shields' who also remained, one is left with only 6,300 infantry for losses, garrisons and settlements for all of Alexander's reign. Given that, as the force of 334 was originally 12,000, losses for subsequently dispatched troops would number only 300. It is clear therefore, that additional forces must have been sent to Asia during Alexander's reign, with their being so going unrecorded. Exactly how many is impossible to know. What can be said, given that as Alexander reigned only 13 years all troops must have been born under Philip's rule, is that Philip was apparently responsible for an amazing turnaround in the scale of Macedon's military. If the above analysis is correct, the crossing force of 334 included 12,000 infantry, the advance party at least 3,000; the forces left in Macedon under Antipater numbered 12,000, and recorded reinforcements totalled 11,000. Cavalry comprised 1,800 in the crossing force, the same again left in Macedon, plus 500 reinforcements in 334 and again in 331. Philip was responsible for, at the very least, 380% increase in Macedonian infantry and 600% growth in cavalry from the 10,000 men and 600 horse he faced Bardylis with in 359.<sup>174</sup>

## (ii) Equipment and Organisation

"Despite the presence of such great terrors and dangers Philip was not dismayed at the gravity of the impending trials, but he made the Macedonians confident by convening them in assembly after assembly and exhorting them by his eloquence to be brave, and after altering for the better the military units and equipping the men appropriately with weapons of war he held continuous manoeuvres under arms and training exercises under combat conditions. Indeed, he invented the close order and the equipment of the phalanx in imitation of the shield-to-shield order of the heroes at Troy, and he first put together the Macedonian phalanx."<sup>175</sup>

So speaks Diodorus on the matter of Philip's military reforms. Immediately noticeable is the implication that Philip introduced the 'Macedonian phalanx' for the first time. This would at first seem unlikely. In 424 Perdiccas II had allied with the

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<sup>174</sup> Ellis 1980, 40 cautiously claims that "the combined total of available horsemen and infantrymen must have at least doubled during Philip's reign, and the increase may have been much higher."

<sup>175</sup> Diod. 16.3.1-3.

Spartan general Brasidas, who used his force of 1,700 hoplites to defeat Perdiccas' Lyncestian enemy Arrhabaeus, who was himself in command of a force of Greek hoplites.<sup>176</sup> Similarly, Amyntas IV had persuaded Sparta to assist in the retaking of his territory from the Olynthians in 381/0.<sup>177</sup> It was thus not as if the Macedonians had never observed the benefits of hoplite phalanxes, or lacked the chance to emulate them. This is not proof that Macedonian kings must have adopted this style of warfare however, and in fact there is no mention of phalanxes or other similar infantry bodies in the description of the military improvements made by Perdiccas' successor, Archelaus:

“[Archelaus] built the forts that now exist in the country, made straight roads and improved military strength in other ways, with horses, arms and military equipment better than all the eight preceding kings.”<sup>178</sup>

Closer to Philip's reign there seems little opportunity for such a situation to have been seriously improved.<sup>179</sup> Indeed, state provision of arms was rare in Greece, and presumably also in Macedon.<sup>180</sup> Even allowing for the severity of Perdiccas' defeat in 359, that Philip was forced to resort to such measures surely indicates that the Macedonian military can have enjoyed little in the way of investment or organisation.<sup>181</sup>

It would seem likely then that whilst the Macedonian army that was crushed by the Illyrians contained 10,000 men with weapons and possibly armour of some kind, they were not trained, experienced or organised in any way that could lead to their being called hoplite infantry. Thus in his above description, Diodorus would have meant that Philip was attempting to properly organise the Macedonian infantry for the first time. It is with this in mind that one should examine the following:

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<sup>176</sup> Alliance with Brasidas: Thuc. 4.79.1. Arrhabaeus: 4.79.2, 83.1. The latter's Greek allies: 4.124.1.

<sup>177</sup> See above, p18.

<sup>178</sup> Thuc. 2.100.2.

<sup>179</sup> See above, p19-20.

<sup>180</sup> Athens' fourth century practice of issuing free shields and spears to youths upon completing military training (Aris. *Pol.* 42.4) is the only such recorded example, and was presumably due to the city's being richer than most others.

<sup>181</sup> See Markle 1978, 484f.

“When Philip put together army for the first time, he forbade the use of carts for everyone, allowed no more than one groom to each cavalryman, and one attendant for each ten infantrymen to carry their grinders and ropes; and he issued the order that flour for thirty days was to be carried on each man’s back when they went out into summer quarters.”<sup>182</sup>

“Philip was training the Macedonians before the dangers. He made them take up their arms and march often 300 stades [c. 35 miles] carrying helmet, shield, greaves, sarissa and in addition to their arms rations and all gear for day-to-day existence.”<sup>183</sup>

There is no obvious reason to doubt such descriptions, as they are entirely in keeping with improving an army’s efficiency. Fifth century Macedonian soldiers of had transported their equipment by ox-cart, for example.<sup>184</sup> Philip’s allowing only one attendant for every ten men and making the men carry their own armour and weapons, would drastically reduce the size of the army’s baggage train, allowing faster movement, and would result in an altogether stronger, fitter and hardier soldier. 35 mile route marches would obviously further this, as would constant training. Such changes of organisation, equipment and training could perfectly well have been introduced within Philip’s first year as king, such is the straightforwardness of their nature. Indeed, such moves would have been the best method of rebuilding the no doubt shattered morale at the recently crushed Macedonian army.

### (iii) The Sarissa

The cornerstone of Macedonian military success from the fourth to the second centuries BC was the sarissa, almost certainly introduced by Philip. The alteration to the existing Greek hoplite spear and the resultant advantage is simple enough. Whereas the existing weapon was approximately eight feet long, the sarissa was between 15 and 18 feet, which would allow the user to engage his opponent without suffering attacks himself.<sup>185</sup> The iron spike on the end of the sarissa was

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<sup>182</sup> Front. 4.1.6.

<sup>183</sup> Polyæn. 4.2.10.

<sup>184</sup> Thuc. 4.128.4.

<sup>185</sup> Theoph. *De Hist. Plant.* 3.12.2 says the longest examples were 12 cubits in length, around 18ft. Asclepiodotus *Tact.* 5.1 claims the shortest were 10 cubits, or approximately 15ft, and agrees with Theophrastus that the longest were not more than 18. Arr. *Tact.* 12 offers the figure of approximately 16ft, perhaps an average. For the calculation of the length of a cubit, see Markle 1977, 323 n. 2.

longer than that of a hoplite spear,<sup>186</sup> and thus carried greater weight behind it, allowing greater damage to be inflicted. However, there is more to the matter. M. M. Markle has calculated that given the length and size of the weapon's head spike,<sup>187</sup> an 18 foot sarissa would have weighed approximately 6.5 kg, and a fifteen foot example slightly under 5.5 kg; an 8 foot hoplite spear on the other hand would have only weighed just one kg.<sup>188</sup> Such a vast change in weapon mass would have meant it was not simply a case of lengthening one's spear and continuing to use it in the same way as before for the Macedonian soldier. Even if the weight were not a problem, the increased length would surely have made fighting with the sarissa held in only one hand impossibly unwieldy. It was surely one or both of these factors that would have resulted in the use of both hands to utilise the sarissa. This demanded a change in the employment of the shield, and in turn its size. As it could no longer be carried by hand, it was apparently strapped around the neck and over the shoulder. Such a move would have required a decrease in the shield's diameter to allow movement, resulting in less protection being provided.<sup>189</sup> In addition, the sarissa allowed significant alteration to be made to the arrangement of the traditional hoplite phalanx. As Hammond has put it,

“Pikemen were to fight in a phalanx, of which the depth was to be ten men instead of the hoplites' eight men. Their advantage was that they could present three or four pike points ahead of the first rank, while the opposing hoplites' spears stayed out of reach. Moreover, because they had a smaller shield, they could form a closer rank, in which a bristling hedge of up to five pike points ahead of the front rank could be presented to the enemy, and a charge by such a phalanx was likely to destroy a standard hoplite phalanx with a minimum of damage to itself.”<sup>190</sup>

The question of when Philip began the introduction of the sarissa, and the changes associated with it is unclear. Hammond has confidently asserted that when Philip met Bardylis in battle in 358, he “led ‘his finest infantrymen,’ equipped with

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<sup>186</sup> See Andronicus 1970, 91-107 for excavated examples and their measurements.

<sup>187</sup> One sarissa spike found at Vergina, for example, dating from the second half of the fourth century BC, weighed 1235g compared to a hoplite-style spear spike from the same site that weighed just 97g. Cf. Andronicus 1970, 98.

<sup>188</sup> Markle 1977, 324f.

<sup>189</sup> Aelian *Tact.* 12; Asclep. *Tact.* 3, 4.1, 5.1; Arr. *Tact.* 12.6; An. 1.6.2; Plut. *Cleom.* 11.2; *Aem.* 19.1;.

<sup>190</sup> Hammond 1994, 19.

and trained as pike-men in what we now call the sarissa-phalanx.”<sup>191</sup> However, training with such new weapons must have taken considerable time. The first year of his reign, as has been said, was most likely haunted by a constant fear of Illyrian invasion, and presumably characterised by a scramble to prepare as many troops as could be mustered before it came. Such a situation was not the time for radical innovation or experimentation. According to Diodorus, Philip positioned “his finest infantrymen”<sup>192</sup> on the right in the battle against Bardylis in 358, a well-established tactic.<sup>193</sup> Contrary to Hammond’s interpretation, such a choice of phrase need not be taken to refer to infantry armed with sarissas. As Philip met Bardylis with a force of 10,000 infantry and 600 cavalry<sup>194</sup> he must have recruited at least 4,000 new men to have met the Illyrian, as Perdiccas had lost that many of his own 10,000-strong force in 359. By “finest infantrymen” Diodorus could well have been referring to those of Philip’s army who had the most experience and training. Given this, the idea that Philip completed the discussed changes to the army entirely at the start of his reign is surely to be rejected.

Unfortunately for one attempting to understand the process and timing of the sarissa’s introduction, the first mention of the weapon being used does not occur until 339, only three years before Philip’s death.<sup>195</sup> In his analysis of speeches of Demosthenes, the commentator Didymus states:

“[Philip] receives his third wound in the assault on the Triballi, when one of the men he was pursuing thrust his sarissa into his right thigh and maimed him.”<sup>196</sup>

Thus not only is the earliest reference to the sarissa very late in Philip’s reign, it also appears to describe the weapon’s use against a Macedonian army rather than by it.

<sup>191</sup> Hammond 1980a, 58f. Cf Errington 1990, 40-41.

<sup>192</sup> Diod. 16.4.5.

<sup>193</sup> Markle 1978, 486f

<sup>194</sup> Diod. 16.4.3.

<sup>195</sup> Markle 1978, 489f has tried to argue against the sarissa having been used at the Macedonian defeat to Onomarchus in 353. Polyaeus’ description of the battle (2.38.2) uses the term ἡκροβολίσαντο to describe the Macedonians’ engaging Onomarchus’ forces, the basic element of which - βολέω, βολίζομαι, βάλλω – suggests a throwing action. The resultant notion that this indicates the use of javelins rather than sarissas has merit, but is hardly conclusive, as Markle himself admits.

<sup>196</sup> Τ[ρ]ίτον τραῦμα λ[α]μβάνει κατὰ τὴν εἰς τοῖβάλλου ἐμβολήν τὴν οἰκιστὴν τινος τῶν διωκομένων εἰς τὸν δεξιὸν αὐτοῦ μηρὸν ὥσαμ[έν]ου κ[αὶ] χωλώσαντος αὐτόν. Didy. *In Demosth.* Col. 13, lines 3-7.



The only conclusion one can draw from this is that the use of the sarissa had presumably become sufficiently established in Macedon to have begun being copied by surrounding kingdoms. Justin also mentions Philip's wounding:

"Philip was wounded in his thigh in such a way that his horse was slain through his own body."<sup>197</sup>

M. M. Markle has argued that such an injury could only have been inflicted by a man who was also mounted, suggesting that the Triballian cavalry were using sarissas.<sup>198</sup> This would have important implications regarding the extent of the weapon's use in the Macedonian army, as Philip's horse would presumably have embraced such a tactic by this time if their rivals had done so. However, Markle's point is debatable. In the melee of battle it is hardly impossible that an infantryman could have stabbed Philip's horse from ground level and pierced his leg in doing so. In addition, Markle's argument depends heavily on his alternative interpretation of Didymus' excerpt describing the Triballians as pursuing Philip., rather than vice versa. The quotation's unclear wording makes this far from certain however. Even if Philip was being pursued, there is no reason to suspect that, for example, having attacked a body of infantry and got into difficulties, he was wounded whilst trying to extract himself from the melee.

The first attested use of the sarissa by a Macedonian army is at the battle of Chaeroneia in 338. Describing the destruction of the 300-strong Sacred Band of Thebes, Plutarch says that:

"After the battle, Philip was surveying the dead, and stopped at the place where the three hundred were lying, all where they had faced and met his sarissae, with their armour and mingled one with another, he was amazed."<sup>199</sup>

It is obvious that use of the sarissa must have been well established in the Macedonian army for Philip to have employed it at so important a battle. Other than

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<sup>197</sup> Just. 9.3.2.

<sup>198</sup> Markle 1978, 489f.

<sup>199</sup> Plut. *Pelop.* 18.5.

this, there is no indication of how long it had been in use in the Macedonian army. However, two references from early in Alexander's reign make an important point about the nature of the sarissa's use in Philip's reign that must be remembered when attempting to understand when it was adopted. During a campaign across the Danube in 335 to suppress the Getae

"Alexander led his men through the field of standing corn, ordering the infantry to lean upon the corn with their sarissas held transversely, and thus to advance into the untilled ground...Terrible to [the Getae] also was the closely-locked order of the phalanx."<sup>200</sup>

As has already been mentioned, Arrian was a man of considerable military understanding. His use of 'sarissas' (σάρισσαι) rather than 'spears' (δόρασι) was thus surely deliberate. Moreover, his source at this point was most likely Ptolemy, also a man to whom such a matter would not be unfamiliar. Clearly then, the sarissa was firmly in place as an infantry weapon.

Shortly before this however, Arrian records an incident with the Taulantians that would suggest the use of the spear, not the sarissa. Finding himself on a plain hemmed in by mountains, woods and a river, and with enemies positioned so that the only route out was so narrow that exit was impossible "even if only four shield-bearers marched abreast", Alexander drew up his troops and had them carry out what can best be described as drill exercises:

"...he gave the signal to the heavy-armed infantry in the first place to hold their spears erect, then to couch them at the concerted sign; at one time to incline their spears to the right, closely locked together, and at another time towards the left. He then set the phalanx itself into quick motion forward, and marched it towards the wings, now to the right, and then to the left."<sup>201</sup>

The speed and skill with which his infantry did so was enough to scare the Taulantians into "quitting the first ridge of the mountains" on which they were positioned. To further exploit this apprehension

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<sup>200</sup> Arr. 1.4.1-4.

<sup>201</sup> *ibid.*

“...Alexander ordered the Macedonians to raise the battle-cry and made a clatter with their spears upon their shields, and the Taulantians, being still more alarmed at the noise led their army back to the city with all speed.”<sup>202</sup>

It is difficult to see how such manoeuvres could have been carried out effectively with 18ft sarissas. In addition, the clashing of a weapon of such length upon a small, shoulder-mounted shield would surely not have been practical. Thus it was surely the shorter spear that was in use here rather than the sarissa. As a result it would seem that in 335 there is one case of Macedonian infantry operating without sarissas, and one where they did. Given Arrian’s already mentioned reliability, it seems reasonable to assume these descriptions’ reliability.

Such variation is surely indicative of the fact that even though the adoption of the sarissa marked a shift in the Macedonian infantry’s default weapon, the use of other weapons was not completely abandoned.<sup>203</sup> Given the specialised nature of the sarissa – it was of use only in set piece battles, not skirmishes and sieges – Macedonian infantry must have been trained to use the more versatile hoplite spear and associated equipment as well.<sup>204</sup> Consequently, the search for an exact point at which the sarissa was introduced would most likely be fruitless even if more information survived for Philip’s reign, as Philip would have adapted his army’s arrangement and armament depending on the circumstances.

#### (iv) Summary of Findings

“It is impossible to say what parts of the army Philip inherited from previous kings, and what he created for himself, as the sources say so little on the subject. It is also impossible to provide a timeline for the reforms. Everything did not happen overnight, and military innovations were still being made as Macedon increased in size and power.”<sup>205</sup>

In saying this, I. Worthington, author of the most recently published biography of Philip, is largely correct. Exactly how much of an army Philip found

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<sup>202</sup> Arr. 1.4.1-4.

<sup>203</sup> Markle 1978, 491. Cf. Griffith 1980, 59.

<sup>204</sup> Griffith 1980, 58; Hammond 1994, 19.

<sup>205</sup> Worthington 2008, 26.

himself in possession of in 359 is unknown, and detailed understanding of what he did to it and when is impossible to ascertain from the surviving source material. However, though the timeline for his reforms remains uncertain, the reforms themselves do not remain unknown to the modern scholar.

Philip was surely behind the introduction of the sarissa. Even though the weapon's first appearance in the sources is not until 339, its importance in the campaigns of his son is too great for Alexander to have been responsible for its widespread use in the Macedonian army. If one assumes this, one can credit Philip with various alterations to the arrangement of the troops that made use of the weapon. Wielding the sarissa with two hands rather than one demanded the shield be carried on the shoulder, resulting in a decrease in its size. This in turn permitted infantrymen to stand closer together, resulting in a more firmly formed phalanx. The weapon's greater reach allowed more spear tips to protrude beyond the phalanx's front row, allowing the unit greater offensive and defensive potential than the standard hoplite equivalent. Altogether this made it extremely difficult for a traditional hoplite phalanx to inflict significant damage on Macedonian infantrymen, as the latter would always be able to offer greater attacking force, and do so before the hoplite unit was close enough to inflict any damage itself.

Philip can also be credited with a vast increase in the scale of the Macedonian army. Although a significant proportion of the 380% increase in infantry and 600% growth in cavalry would have been a result of the reabsorption of Upper Macedonia, a greater proportion would have been due to the stability that Philip brought to Macedon. Once the threat of foreign incursion was removed, domestic productivity would have improved, resulting in steady population growth. Philip's using allied forces alongside his own throughout his reign would have helped this. Increasing the number of potential soldiers was not Philip's only contribution however. His changes to the way in which the army travelled and was trained brought to it a new level of professionalism.

One cannot be sure exactly what state Macedon's army was in when Philip acceded in 359. However, that it was small, basic and poorly equipped seems very likely; unfamiliar with traditional hoplite-phalanx warfare very possible; and low on morale following a crushing defeat near certain. By the end of his reign it was approximately four times the size it had been. In addition, it was seemingly trained in a superior version of such phalanx-based combat that made it the premier fighting force in the ancient world. That Alexander, apparently without any major alteration or improvement, was able to achieve what he did with the same army is surely the clearest indication of the achievement this represented.

## V. Conclusions

Philip II has the reputation of one who rescued a country on the verge of destruction and finally realised its full military potential. This chapter has attempted to investigate whether such a reputation is deserved, and indeed whether sufficient evidence survives to fairly assess the matter at all.

With regard to the challenges Philip faced upon becoming king in 359, the danger posed by the Illyrians, Thracians, Paeonians and Illyrians was undoubtedly huge. However, it would seem that some of these peoples were not as concerned with wreaking the destruction they were capable of as Philip and the Macedonians might have feared. The bribes that dissuaded the Paeonians and Thracians from serious incursions into Macedonian territory cannot have been large given Macedon's financial state. Similarly, Philip apparently inspired Athens to withdraw support for their pretender to the throne simply by withdrawing his garrison from Amphipolis. Even so, one must still recognise the achievement such matters represent; persuading the Paeonian and Thracian kings to agree to such terms should not be underestimated as they were already reaping the benefits of raids into Macedon, and had to be persuaded to desist. However, Philip's finest achievement in 359 is in regard to the Illyrians. Unlike the kings of Thrace and Paeonia, Bardylis was clearly concerned with major invasion. It would seem perfectly possible, even likely that Philip managed to persuade the Illyrian to agree to a peace, sealed with a marriage. Even though this suggests he too was not fully concerned with complete conquest of Macedon, Philip's achievement should not be underestimated. His defeat of Bardylis' forces only a year later is perhaps even more impressive given the losses sustained by Perdiccas in 359, the quality of the forces remaining and the level morale must have been at.

It is in his effect on the Macedonian army that Philip's achievement truly lies. The growth in its size was huge, and cannot be put down simply to the economic stability that resulted from Macedon's borders being secure from outside threats.

Rather, the accounts offered of his changes to the army's organisation and training standards indicate a concerted effort to turn it into the finest fighting force in the Greek world. Constant expansion of the army's numbers must have formed part of this.

The biggest single trigger for fundamental alteration to every aspect of the military's organisation, particularly in the case of the infantry, was the introduction of the sarissa. This was undoubtedly Philip's innovation, and resulted in a fundamental change to the arrangement of the infantry phalanx, and the way it was operated. Use of the sarissa required a very high level of training, both personally and as a unit. It also led to a change in the size and employment of the shield, which was strapped across the shoulder rather than carried in the hand. Unfortunately one has as little information on the process by which these changes occurred as one does on the stages of the army's expansion. One is left to comment only on the results of the innovations, not the processes by which they were introduced. However, this does not detract from the achievement the changes represent. Philip took an army that was small, broken and possibly even unfamiliar with the basic concept of the Greek hoplite phalanx, and not only defeated the Ilyrian forces who had only one year before killed 4,000 Macedonians, but turned it into the premiere fighting force in the Greek world. That Alexander was able to embark on his invasion of the Persian empire and achieve what he did so soon after becoming king firmly indicates this. Thus it would be fair to say that Philip's reputation as saviour of Macedon and one who realised its potential is well justified.





I. Introduction

The history of Philip's relations with Athens is long and complex enough to fill entire books. This chapter will thus not be a study of such relations in their entirety, and certainly not of Philip's wider involvement with the myriad Greek city-states generally. Instead, the focus will be the conflict that existed between Athens and Macedon from the early stages of Philip's reign until the summer of 346, and which culminated on the highly controversial 'Peace of Philocrates'. The purpose, in keeping with the general theme of this work, will be to indicate whether the modern scholar can make a fair assessment of Philip's political aims regarding Athens in this period, and indeed with Greece generally. As will be seen, Philip was very much the party who sought to bring the conflict between the two sides, which had begun in 358/7, to a close. The question that will be considered concerns what exactly his motives were in doing so. Although, as has been stated, a detailed study of Philip's involvement with Athens or the rest of Greece up to this point is not possible or appropriate, some examination of such matters must occur. Understanding the events that preceded the treaty of 346 is crucial to grasping the context in which Philip's actions were made.

Consequently, this chapter will be constructed along broadly chronological lines. It will firstly outline the causes of the outbreak of the war between the two parties which, as will be seen, was almost entirely the result of Philip's actions towards Athenian holdings in the north Aegean. The events will be examined to see whether or not Philip was guilty of intentionally misleading Athens, to delay the declaration of war for his own strategic gain. As such an accusation has been levelled at Philip regarding the Peace of Philocrates, this will offer important insight into his early attitude towards Athens.

The following section will offer a brief summary of the Third Sacred War, its causes and the stage at which matters stood when Philip and Athens opened peace talks. In the opinion of many modern scholars Philip's actions towards and promises to Athens were directly informed by his intentions regarding the conclusion of the Sacred War, into which he had become drawn. An understanding of Philip's involvement in the conflict is thus crucial to a fair examination of his motives in 346.

The following section will focus on the events that led up to the close of the conflict, and examine what inspired the Athenians, who were suffering no greater lack of success than they had done in previous years, to respond to Philip's overtures when they had previously rejected them.

The chapter's focus will then turn to the extended negotiations that surrounded the terms of peace settlement. Both of the embassies sent by Athens to Philip's court will be examined, as will the surrounding debates held in the Assembly. It is here in particular that the reliability of the evidence will be examined, as the chief surviving sources are the speeches of Aeschines and Demosthenes. As has been mentioned elsewhere, their rivalry, and the context of most of the relevant speeches call into serious question how many, if any, of their claims can be trusted.

## II. War

### (i) Outbreak of War

It has been argued elsewhere<sup>206</sup> that Philip's withdrawal of the Macedonian garrison present at Amphipolis in 359 was clearly done with the aim of placating the Athenians and persuading them to abandon their support for Argeus, the pretender to Philip's throne. After this went as Philip had hoped, and Argeus was defeated, Philip sent a letter of friendship to Athens,<sup>207</sup> which was followed soon after by an embassy to assure the Athenians he had renounced all claim to Amphipolis.<sup>208</sup>

However, in early 357 the Athenians had not acted on this information and moved against Amphipolis, perhaps mindful of their failure to take the city in their previous attempts,<sup>209</sup> but more likely as a result of their being involved with Euboea and the Chersonese.<sup>210</sup> Consequently, when "the Amphipolitans were unfriendly to him and had given him provocation," Philip besieged the city and captured it fairly swiftly.<sup>211</sup> It did not occur so quickly that Athens could not have reacted however; indeed, Amphipolitan envoys reached Athens and offered to surrender to Athenian rule if only Philip was repulsed.<sup>212</sup> Such an offer was rejected however, when a message from Philip was received promising to hand the city over to Athens upon its capture.<sup>213</sup>

Athens' taking such an approach, combined with Demosthenes' cryptic reference to a "secret everyone was talking about" at the time<sup>214</sup> has led some to

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<sup>206</sup> See above, p23-4.

<sup>207</sup> Dem. 23.121.

<sup>208</sup> Diod. 16.4.1.

<sup>209</sup> Most recently an expedition led by Timotheus had failed in 360/59 – Aesch. Schol. 2.31; Polyæn. 3.10.8.

<sup>210</sup> Griffith 1979, 237.

<sup>211</sup> Diod. 16.8.2. How the Amphipolitans were "unfriendly" is unknown. Hammond 1994, 30 suggests the party in power were hostile to Philip, who felt he could not risk this leading to an alliance with Athens. Griffith 1979 suspects that Philip sought to exploit Athens' inaction, and demanded Amphipolis allow a Macedonian garrison to be reinstalled, with Philip using the city's refusal as provocation for his attack.

<sup>212</sup> Dem. 1.8, 26.

<sup>213</sup> Dem. 2.27, 23.116.

<sup>214</sup> He was of course speaking eight years after the events he was describing.

suspect that a secret arrangement was made for Athens to receive control of Amphipolis from Philip in exchange for surrendering Pydna.<sup>215</sup> Athenian ambassadors were certainly dispatched to attempt to negotiate such an arrangement,<sup>216</sup> but that it was ever officially agreed upon is most unlikely. Such a matter could hardly have been a secret at Athens, as it would need to have been approved by the Assembly. If this were the case the arrangement would have been official, in which case it would have been related as such. The only alternative is that it was a rumour,<sup>217</sup> which could perfectly well have resulted from the envoys being dispatched. More significantly however, the Athenians had already been promised Amphipolis for free. Their seeking to exchange another city for it can only have occurred some time later, when Philip had failed to deliver the city as initially promised.

That the Athenians believed that they could still do such business with a man who had presumably gone back on his word once already may seem naïve. However, it would explain how they did not declare war on Philip, despite their failure to secure Amphipolis after its capture, until the king attacked and took control of Pydna in 357.<sup>218</sup> G. T. Griffith has argued that the Athenians would not have been hugely shocked by Philip's not surrendering Amphipolis. Instead, their experience in Greek inter-state politics would have led them to presume Philip was angling to gain something for surrendering the city, and see such a move as regular enough to allow for it. A deal involving Pydna was thus a response to this.<sup>219</sup> Such an argument cannot be proven, but it should be said that it is harder to accept that the Athenians believed Philip would genuinely surrender as important a site as Amphipolis, without expecting anything in return.

On reality Philip clearly had no intention of surrendering Amphipolis for any price. As has been said, soon after the city was taken he moved against Pydna itself,

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<sup>215</sup> See de Ste-Croix 1963, 110-119.

<sup>216</sup> Theop. *FGrh* n. 115 F 30A and 30 B.

<sup>217</sup> de Ste-Croix 1963, 111f. Cf. Griffith 1979, 238f.

<sup>218</sup> Diod. 16.8.3.

<sup>219</sup> Griffith 1979, 239f.

and took it after a short siege.<sup>220</sup> It was apparently not until this point that Athens finally recognised the true situation, and declared war.<sup>221</sup> One might wonder why Philip continued to indicate that he genuinely intended to withdraw from Amphipolis until this time. The most likely answer is that he was in negotiations with the Chalcidian League, which he did want allying with Athens, and so did what he could to delay for as long as possible the latter's turning against him.

The Chalcidian League had already attempted to forge an alliance with Athens in 358 but the latter had rejected the overtures thanks to Philip's promise of Amphipolis. This time Philip headed off an Athenian-Chalcidian union by promising the League control of the city of Potidaea if the League allied with him against it.<sup>222</sup> Philip ensured the treaty included a clause that neither party should ally separately with the Greek city, clearly to guarantee an agreement with Athens was avoided.<sup>223</sup> This situation secure, Philip soon moved against Potidaea. Athens voted to send a force to relieve it, but for reasons that remain unclear it was most likely never dispatched.<sup>224</sup> Significantly though, when the city fell its Athenian *cleuruchs* were permitted to return to Athens unharmed, whilst the rest of the population was enslaved.<sup>225</sup>

At this point one should pause. As mentioned above, the Social War of 357-5 curtailed the Athenians' opposition to Philip. The extent of their moves against Macedon in the mid-350s were consequently limited to the signing of various treaties with Philip's other enemies in the north Aegean, including the Paeonians, Thracians and Illyrians.<sup>226</sup> Philip turned his attention to campaigning against these rivals, and thereafter became increasingly involved in the conflict that had divided Greece, the Third Sacred War.

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<sup>220</sup> Diod. 16.8.3.

<sup>221</sup> Aesch. 2.70.

<sup>222</sup> Ellis 1976, 67f; Griffith 1979, 244.

<sup>223</sup> Dem. 2.7, 23.107; Diod. 16.8.3f; Tod *GHI* ii. 158.

<sup>224</sup> Dem. 4.35.

<sup>225</sup> Diod. 16.8.5; Plut. *Alex.* 3.8.

<sup>226</sup> Tod *GHI* ii.151, 158.

## (ii) The Sacred War

As has been said, the focus of this essay is not Philip's relations with all of the Greek states. However, the impact of the Third Sacred War on the political and military actions of all the Greek states is such that a brief summary of its events, and Philip's involvement in them, is necessary.

The Third Sacred War had broken out in 356.<sup>227</sup> Thebes, the dominant state in Greece for much of the 360s, had seen her position begin to weaken since the inconclusive battle of Mantinea in 363/2, where the city's great general, Epaminondas, had been killed. Thebes' strength had previously been recognised by it being granted precedence over all other cities on the Amphictyonic Council in consulting the oracles of Apollo at Delphi and Demeter and Thermopylae. The council was responsible for the protection of the sacred shrine and comprised representatives from multiple city-states, its origins lying in the twelve 'Amphictyones' ('dwellers around'), tribes who originally resided nearby.<sup>228</sup> It was through her prominent position on this body, combined with the support of her allies that Thebes sought to arrest her political slide. When, in 357, Athens was drawn into conflict with Rhodes, Chios, Cos and Byzantium, Thebes attempted to strengthen her own position through her position on the Council. This took the form of a large fine for Athens' ally Sparta for an occupation of the Theban acropolis back on 382.<sup>229</sup> This was swiftly followed by a similar fine for the Phocians for illegally cultivating the Cirrhaian Plain.<sup>230</sup> The Phocians were outraged and refused to pay. Although from the beginning they enjoyed Spartan backing, the Phocians lacked the manpower and finances to oppose Thebes militarily. They therefore occupied Delphi with what forces they had and used its funds to hire armies of mercenaries. Soon, formal alliances were made with Athens and Sparta, though they were worth little

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<sup>227</sup> The best examination of the Third Sacred War is provided by Buckler 1989.

<sup>228</sup> *IG* ii<sup>2</sup> 1126. Cf. *Aris. Pol.* 6.5.4; *Aesch.* 2.116.

<sup>229</sup> *Diod.* 16.23.2-3, 29.2; *Just.* 8.1.5. Cf. *Xen Hell.* 5.2.27-31; *FGrH* 324 F50.

<sup>230</sup> *Diod.* 16.23.2-3. Buckler 1989, 6-7 argues that this was at the behest of the Delphians, who had recently allied with Thebes following the descent of their previous ally, Thessaly, into civil war. Their motivation for moving against Phocis lay in the Phocians' support for a Delphian political exile and his supporters.

militarily, and in response Thebes persuaded the rest of the Amphictyonic Council to declare war on them in 355.<sup>231</sup>

The swift success that the Thebans hoped for with the League's combined forces was not forthcoming; indeed, the Phocian commander Philomelus inflicted several defeats on the Boeotian and Thessalian forces in 354, with the result that the latter split into two groups. The tyrants who controlled Pherae allied with Athens and joined the Phocian cause. The remainder of the Thessalian League appealed to Philip for help against them. Having captured Methone, he answered the calls in early 353, and soon allied with Thebes and her other allies.<sup>232</sup>

Shortly before, in the autumn of 354, Boeotian forces inflicted a serious defeat on Philomelus, who committed suicide.<sup>233</sup> The Thebans were so confident that this victory and Philip's entry into the war signalled the end of the Phocian resistance that they sent 5,000 men to serve as mercenaries against the Persian king, as the payments would go some way to covering their war expenses. However, they had misjudged the situation, as the Phocians swiftly found a dynamic and extremely capable new leader, Onomarchus. With an army of newly hired mercenaries he forced Thebes' ally Locris out of the war, and pinned down the forces of the various cities in Boeotia. He also bribed various Thessalian cities, including Pherae, to withdraw from the conflict. Philip was required to act, and with his own forces and those of the Thessalian League he besieged Pherae. A relief effort sent by Onomarchus was initially defeated, but in 353 the man himself arrived and with the aid of Pheraean forces inflicted two defeats upon Philip, and forced him out of Thessaly.<sup>234</sup>

Further Phocian success in 353 meant that were Onomarchus to have united with Athenian forces the next year, the rest of Thessaly would surely have fallen to

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<sup>231</sup> Diod. 16.28.4f.

<sup>232</sup> Paus. 10.2.5.

<sup>233</sup> Diod. 16.31.3-5; Paus. 10.2.4.

<sup>234</sup> Diod. 16.35.1-2; Polyæn.2.38.2.

him. Boeotia would have followed, and the destruction of Thebes was the likely culmination of events. Philip therefore swiftly renewed his siege of Pherae, and persuaded the Thessalian League to grant him command of all their forces. When Onomarchus responded to renewed appeals from Pherae, Philip defeated him at the Battle of the Crocus Field. The Phocian leader either died or committed suicide, as the destruction of his forces meant the effective end of Phocis' ability to fight on.<sup>235</sup> Pherae swiftly surrendered, and Philip saw that only its tyrants were punished. The war was effectively over, with the only matter remaining being the capture of Phocis. Before pursuing this however, Philip dealt with various matters in Thessaly. The result was his being elected to the position of archon of the League for life, thus effectively granting him permanent control of its resources and military.<sup>236</sup>

The matter of Phocis was not to be settled soon. To reach the city from northern Greece required passage through Thermopylae. When Philip approached the pass in 352 it was blocked by a force of 5,000 Athenian infantry and 200 cavalry.<sup>237</sup> Philip retreated without engaging. The Athenians were not to assemble such a force against Philip again until the Battle of Chaeronea in 339/8; that they did so in 352 was most likely due to a fear that once he had dealt with the Phocians, Philip would turn on them. With his having passed through Thermopylae, they would have no way of opposing his entry into Attica. Sparta and Achaia would presumably have feared a similar invasion of the Peloponnese.

### (iii) Closing of the War

As a result of the Social War, Athens' control of the north Aegean had weakened, allowing the northern Chalcidian League, to dominate trade between Euboea and the Chersonese. As has been mentioned, the League had allied with Philip in 357, having previously sought a union with Athens. However, in his speech

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<sup>235</sup> Diod. 16.35.5-6, 61.2; Dem. 4.35, 19.319.

<sup>236</sup> Hammond 1994, 48f provides an excellent summary of events.

<sup>237</sup> Diod. 16.39.3. Only Athenians are mentioned as being at Thermopylae (cf. Dem. 19.319; Just. 8.2.28), but Diod. 16.38.1 mentions that 1,000 Spartans and 2,000 Achaeans were also sent out.



*Against Aristocrates*, most likely delivered in 352,<sup>238</sup> Demosthenes mentions that the Olynthians “became [Athens’] friends.”<sup>239</sup> Given that the line before, Demosthenes notes that “they were his allies and through him were at war with [Athens],” this presumably means that peace was agreed between Olynthus and Athens. The reason Demosthenes gives for this is the Olynthians seeing Philip as “too great to be trusted.” This would indeed be the only reasonable explanation, as the Chalcidians would have been well aware of the advancement he had enjoyed since 357 against Macedon’s neighbours, and ran through his involvement with the Thessalian League.

If a treaty was signed between Athens and the League in 352 then one can be sure that Philip’s reaction was not aggressive. Upon returning from Thessaly in the autumn of that year he invaded the territory of the Thracian king Cersebleptes.<sup>240</sup> He did apparently enter Olynthian territory, but not until 351.<sup>241</sup> Importantly, Philip apparently did not force Olynthus to rescind its peace with Athens,<sup>242</sup> so at most he presumably reminded the city of the terms of its alliance with him,<sup>243</sup> and maybe demanded assurances they would be adhered to, which his entry into Olynthian territory doubtless helped to extract.

The alliance continued until 349, when war apparently broke out over an different matter.

“After this Philip attacked the people of Olynthus for having shown compassion and given shelter to two of his half-brothers after he had murdered the third. These were the sons of his stepmother, and Philip desperately wished to do away with them as potential claimants to the throne.”<sup>244</sup>

One cannot dismiss completely the idea that Philip used this situation as a pretext to attack an ally he no longer trusted, but to demand the surrender of such men was

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<sup>238</sup> See Griffith 1979, 297f on the impossibility of definite dating.

<sup>239</sup> Dem. 23.107-9.

<sup>240</sup> Schol. Aesch. 2.81.

<sup>241</sup> Dem. 4.17.

<sup>242</sup> This is implicit in Dem. 3.7’s reference to the matter.

<sup>243</sup> Hammond 1994, 50.

<sup>244</sup> Just. 8.3.10, cf. 7.4.5.

hardly unreasonable.<sup>245</sup> A loyal ally would be unlikely to harbour men who were enemies of an allied ruler, and certainly not refuse to surrender them. Indeed, it would seem more likely that by doing such things, Olynthus provoked the conflict. Certainly, if the city was afraid of eventual subjugation to Philip, a stand against him presumably had more chance sooner rather than later. The League's military strength – 1,000 cavalry and more than 10,000 infantry – was more than twice that of 383/2, when the League was dissolved following defeat by Sparta,<sup>246</sup> so it would be understandable if Olynthus wished to make a stand. That said, Philip could assemble significantly more troops with ease, and fewer than half of the League's forces were Olynthian. Olynthus could hope for Athenian support, but it would take a long time to reach the city.<sup>247</sup> In a situation one could argue that Olynthus was unlikely to have provoked a conflict with a Macedonian force that was still its ally, but equally that Philip did not do so as he could have done in 352 but did not do so.

War was the outcome however, whichever party sought it more. Philip's tactic upon invading the Chalcidice in 349 was to dissect the League by moving against its numerous smaller members.<sup>248</sup> Only one such city is recorded as resisting, and was destroyed.<sup>249</sup> Olynthus itself remained secure, and late in the summer of 349 was reinforced by the Athenian general Chares, who brought with him 2,000 peltasts and 38 triremes, eight of which were specially commissioned for the purpose.<sup>250</sup> Such a force was the first of three expeditions sent by Athens, and whilst each one would no doubt have boosted Olynthian morale and extended the city's resistance to a Macedonian siege,<sup>251</sup> the forces hardly seem intended to help the city go on the offensive against Philip. Philip being able, around the time of the first

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<sup>245</sup> Griffith 1979, 315.

<sup>246</sup> Dem. 19.263.

<sup>247</sup> Griffith, 1979, 315.

<sup>248</sup> On Philip's tactics, see esp. Cawkwell 1962, 122f, cf. 1980, 101f; Ellis 1976, 94f.

<sup>249</sup> Diod. 16.52.9, though the name is corrupted.

<sup>250</sup> Philoch. *FGrH* n. 328 F49. The second expedition comprised 4,000 peltasts, 150 cavalry and 18 triremes, and the third 2,000 hoplites, 300 cavalry and 17 triremes (Philoch. *ibid*, F50 and 51). The third expedition did not reach Olynthus before the city's fall, due to poor weather condition, possibly the northerly Etesian winds. See Cawkwell 1962, 130f.

<sup>251</sup> Griffith 1979, 318.

expedition's arrival, to return to Thessaly to deal with a revolt in Pherae, indicates this.<sup>252</sup>

Whether Athens was unable to send greater forces to Olynthus' aid,<sup>253</sup> or disinterested in doing so – the second expedition's leader being one Charidemus, 'the general of the Hellespont' suggests that what troops were sent were merely redirected from existing forces rather than especially assembled – her ability to support the Chalcidian city was diminished by becoming involved in Euboea. In 348, Plutarchus, the tyrant of the Euboean city of Eretria, was overthrown. His connections at Athens<sup>254</sup> led to forces being sent to support him in what was no doubt expected to be a straightforward political intervention. The Athenian force was very nearly lost however, and a general uprising ensued across the whole island. More troops were sent as Athens became embroiled in an operation that lasted well into the summer of 348. By the end all but one Euboean city was independent, and Athens was forced to pay fifty talents in ransom to secure the return of its men.<sup>255</sup>

Aeschines and Plutarch both claim that Philip was responsible for arranging the revolt in Euboea to distract the Athenians from reinforcing Olynthus more thoroughly, and there is some evidence to support this view.<sup>256</sup> In most likely 351, several letters from Philip, originally addressed "to the Euboeans", had been read to the Athenian Assembly.<sup>257</sup> Their content is not recorded, but given the probable unpopularity of the Athenian-backed tyrant Plutarchus, Philip would presumably have been attempting to foment discontent by highlighting Athens' recent poor record of defending her allies in the north.<sup>258</sup> Philip's attacks on Olynthus itself rather than her Chalcidian allies began around the time of Athens' Euboean entanglement,<sup>259</sup> and the revolutionary Euboean leader Callias immediately turned

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<sup>252</sup> Theop. *FGrH* n. 115 F137 and 138. Cf Griffith 1979, 321.

<sup>253</sup> Cawkwell 1980, 102.

<sup>254</sup> Attested by Dem. 21.110, 200.

<sup>255</sup> Carter 1971, 418f provides an excellent description of events.

<sup>256</sup> Aesch. 3.87. Plut. *Phoc.* 12.

<sup>257</sup> Dem. 4.37.

<sup>258</sup> Brunt 1969, 249f.

<sup>259</sup> Diod. 16.53.2.

to Philip for help once the revolt in Eretria began.<sup>260</sup> However, much of this is circumstantial. Philip's letters of 351 are not proof of involvement three years later.<sup>261</sup> Callias' appealing to Philip could have been inspired by the memory of the letters or by the simple fact that Athens was at war with Philip. As for Philip's beginning attacks against Olynthus soon after the Euboean revolt began, such a point marked his return from Thessaly.<sup>262</sup> If he had engineered the events in Euboea, surely he would have been in position somewhat earlier to take maximum advantage of them? Perhaps most tellingly though, the scholiast commenting on Aeschines' account makes no mention of Philip in his brief summary of the events in Euboea.<sup>263</sup> Similarly, Demosthenes, speaking proudly in 346 of how he was the only one to have opposed the Athenian intervention in Euboea, makes no such reference to the king.<sup>264</sup> If Philip had been involved it is difficult to see why Demosthenes would not have sought to resist him in an area so close to Attica.<sup>265</sup>

Demosthenes' opposition suggests that he saw Euboea as a distraction from the real issue of Olynthus.<sup>266</sup> That the Athenians ignored him suggests the general feeling was the opposite. As has been said, the forces sent to Olynthus were apparently diverted from elsewhere rather than newly assembled,<sup>267</sup> and Demosthenes later derided the Athenians for being content to accept "so-and-so's mercenaries have won a victory" as sufficient news from Olynthus.<sup>268</sup> Whether this was a result of miscalculation or a deliberate feeling that Olynthus could not be saved, or perhaps was not worth the effort, the result was the city's swift capture by Philip. Two victories upon his return to the Chalcidice in 348 were soon followed by the capture of nearby Torone and more importantly, Micyberna, the harbour of Olynthus.<sup>269</sup> The precise date of the Olynthus' capture is unknown, but Demosthenes

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<sup>260</sup> Aesch. 3.87.

<sup>261</sup> Brunt 1969, 249f.

<sup>262</sup> Diod. 16.37.3. On the apparent repetition of this at 16.52.9, see Griffith 1979, 319f.

<sup>263</sup> Aesch. Schol. 3.86.

<sup>264</sup> Dem. 5.5.

<sup>265</sup> Cawkwell 1962, 129. Cf. Brunt 1969, 250.

<sup>266</sup> Brunt 1969, 249f.

<sup>267</sup> Carter 1971, 428f.

<sup>268</sup> Dem. 3.35.

<sup>269</sup> Diod. 16.53.2.

mentions that the entire war lasted less than a year.<sup>270</sup> A significant number of Olynthian forces had surrendered to Philip when the city chose to fight on after Micyberna's capture,<sup>271</sup> but those that remained were enslaved with the civilian populace. Olynthus was destroyed and the Chalcidian League disbanded.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Dem. 19.266.

<sup>271</sup> Dem. 19.267. Diodorus describes determined Olynthian resistance, something the archaeology seemingly confirms. See Robinson et al 1930-52, 10.378, 382, 388, 392, 405.

<sup>272</sup> Dem. 9.11 and 56, 19.267.

## II. Peace

### (i) Lead Up to the Peace

The fall of Olynthus did not on its own mean the war between Athens and Macedon was over. However, Philip had tried several times before the Olynthian war to end the conflict, and following his dissolving of the Chalcidian League, he tried again.<sup>273</sup> It is likely that his uncompromising treatment of the captured Olynthians was intended as a clear warning that Athens should not refuse his offers again.<sup>274</sup> Olynthus had, after all, rejected his terms following his capture of Meciycberna, just as Athens had refused his overtures before 349.<sup>275</sup> In such light Olynthus' destruction could well be seen as a warning for the Athenians not to waste their last chance.

Athens' aims had always been different to Philip's however. Whilst he had not faced the slightest Athenian challenge to his control of Amphipolis since capturing it in 357, a belief in a hereditary and legal right to the city<sup>276</sup> was central enough to the Athenian mindset that the war with Philip was seen as 'the war for Amphipolis.'<sup>277</sup> Consequently, the city did not figure at all in the peace Philip sought, but an end to the war that did not see it back in Athenian hands was unacceptable at Athens. It was such sentiment that saw, instead of increased interest in Philip's overtures, the prosecution of Philocrates in late 348 for suggesting that Philip be permitted to send ambassadors to Athens,<sup>278</sup> and efforts to bring about a Greek coalition against the king.<sup>279</sup> Even such measures receiving a complete lack of

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<sup>273</sup> Aesch. 2.15-16. See Ellis 1976, 99f; Ryder 2001, 58f.

<sup>274</sup> Griffith 1979, 327.

<sup>275</sup> Dem. 9.11.

<sup>276</sup> The city was originally an Athenian colony (Thuc. 4.102.1f) before its revolt in 423, and had been given back to Athens as part of the Peace of Nicias two years later (5.18.5), though control of the city was never reasserted. The Athenian claim had also been recognised at a Pan-Hellenic conference, probably held in 370/69 (Aesch. 2.32; Dem. 19.253). See Cawkwell 1980, 101f; Griffith 1979, 231f.

<sup>277</sup> Isoc. 5.1 in 346; Aesch. 2.70 in 343.

<sup>278</sup> Aesch. 2.12, 17. That said, Philocrates was acquitted so comprehensively, with Demosthenes speaking in his favour, that his prosecutors were forced to pay the fine for wasting the court's time – Aesch. 2.14, 3.62.

<sup>279</sup> Aesch. 2.79; Dem. 19.10-11; Diod. 16.54.1.

support elsewhere was not enough;<sup>280</sup> to make Athens face reality required further developments.

The first of several additional matters that converged around the time of Olynthus' fall included recent developments near the Chersonese. The region had always been a key concern for Athens, as it was through it that the grain supply on which the city relied came. To secure this supply, the Athenian general Chares campaigned in the region in 353, and had established relations with the Thracian king Cersebleptes. The result had been the Thracian ceding all cities in the region but one to him.<sup>281</sup> Settlers had followed in 352.<sup>282</sup> However, Philip had campaigned against Cersebleptes the same year as a result of Chares' actions, and his success meant that Athens was in danger of losing its grain supply.<sup>283</sup>

Events at Phocis also gave much food for thought. Financial problems and the looming spectre of Philip and the Boeotians meant that in 347, a faction who hoped to distance the city from the accusations of sacrilege had deposed the leading general Phalaecus and his political allies. Control of the passes at Thermopylae was offered to Athens and Sparta.<sup>284</sup> Both began preparing troops, but Phalaecus, "unable to defend himself successfully against the charge of sacrilege, and unwilling to serve as scapegoat for it," retained command of the Phocian mercenary forces. With Thermopylae under his control, he dismissed the Athenian and Spartan forces when they arrived.<sup>285</sup> Athens was thus not even able to directly influence the key matter of influencing Philip's entry into southern Greece. To this Philip added further pressure by returning to Thessaly in 347 and besieging the cities of Halus and Pharsalus.<sup>286</sup> By doing so he brought his army and siege train within easy reach of the pass.

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<sup>280</sup> Hammond 1994, 82; Ryder 2001, 47.

<sup>281</sup> Dem. 23.170; Diod. 16.34.3-4. See Ryder 2001, 60f.

<sup>282</sup> Dem. 23.103.

<sup>283</sup> See Burstein 1999, 93-104.

<sup>284</sup> Aesch. 2.133.

<sup>285</sup> Aesch. 2.18-20; Dem. 19.12. On the exact chronology, see Griffith 1979, 335 n. 5.

<sup>286</sup> Dem. 19.36, 163, 174.

When Philip again sent news that he still hoped for an alliance with the city, Philocrates reintroduced his proposal to send ambassador to Philip, and ten envoys were dispatched to Macedon.<sup>287</sup> In 343 Demosthenes attempted to claim that

“at the outset [Philip] was desirous of peace, for his whole country was overrun by marauders, and his ports were blockaded, so that he got no advantage from all his wealth.”

This should be ignored, as Diodorus describes in detail how, following the capture of Olynthus, Philip “celebrated the Olympian festival...and offered magnificent sacrifices; and he organised a great festive assembly at which he held splendid competitions.”<sup>288</sup>

## (ii) The First Embassy

The envoys, who included Aeschines, Demosthenes and Philocrates,<sup>289</sup> were received by Philip as he prepared to campaign once more in Thrace.<sup>290</sup> The king reportedly acted politely, heard all ten envoys speak, and responded at length.<sup>291</sup> The terms he proposed are not listed by any surviving source. However, their details can be gleaned from subsequent references elsewhere. Thus they can be seen to have included:

1. That both parties should retain what territory they each held at the time of the alliance’s official agreement.<sup>292</sup>
2. That as well as a peace treaty, the two parties should sign an alliance, which should not be subject to any time limit.<sup>293</sup>
3. That this alliance should be defensive in nature.<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Aesch. 2.132-5; Dem. 19.75-4, 77; Diod. 16.59.2.

<sup>288</sup> Dem. 19.315.

<sup>289</sup> Aesch. 2.25-35.

<sup>290</sup> Aesch. 2.18.

<sup>291</sup> Aesch. 2.88f (Philip’s replies), 44f, 51f (his charm and skill as a speaker).

<sup>292</sup> Dem. 7.18.

<sup>293</sup> Dem. 19.48.

<sup>294</sup> Dem. 19.143.



4. That both parties should not support pirates in any way, and should unite against them if necessary.<sup>295</sup>

The only disagreement arose over the Athenians' concern regarding Amphipolis, which Philip dismissed, claiming the city by right of conquest.<sup>296</sup> Instead, he promised the return of Athenian hostages taken at Olynthus if peace were agreed.<sup>297</sup>

It was with these terms that the ambassadors returned to Athens, along with Philip's assurances that he would not invade the Chersonese as part of his Thracian campaign whilst the Athenian people were debating the terms of the peace.<sup>298</sup> They were either accompanied or followed soon after by Macedonian envoys, to oversee the expected Athenian approval of the peace and alliance. With them apparently came a letter from Philip in which he reportedly stated

"I would write more explicitly of the benefits I intend to confer on you, if I were certain that the alliance will be made."<sup>299</sup>

It would seem that, inspired by this and the impression Philip had given when he received the Athenian embassy, most, if not all the envoys spoke enthusiastically in favour of the peace upon returning to Athens. It certainly seems that Aeschines, Demosthenes and Philocrates did so;<sup>300</sup> Demosthenes in particular ensured safe passage for the Macedonian envoys through Attica, arranged for them to have seats at the theatre, moved that they be officially received when they arrived, and that the Assembly meet to debate the matter of the peace and alliance.<sup>301</sup>

In 343 Demosthenes accused Aeschines of writing Philip's letter himself, having being bribed to do so by the king.<sup>302</sup> This is surely to be rejected as a product

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<sup>295</sup> Dem. 12.2, 7.14.

<sup>296</sup> Aesch. 2.33; Dem. 19.253.

<sup>297</sup> Aesch. 2.100; Dem. 19.168.

<sup>298</sup> Aesch. 2.82.

<sup>299</sup> Dem. 19.38-41. Cf. Aesch. 2.45, 124-5

<sup>300</sup> Aesch. 2.47-50, 68, 79; Dem. 19.14-15, 44.

<sup>301</sup> Aesch. 2. 53, 60-1, 67, 109, 111, 3.67; Dem. 19.235, 58.

<sup>302</sup> Dem. 19.38-41.

of Demosthenes' attempts to smear Aeschines' reputation, both because of the above support he showed for the peace settlement the letter advocated, and Aeschines' strong counter-argument:

"[Demosthenes] says that I went down the Loedias river to Philip in a canoe by night...and that time and again I had private interviews with Philip in the daytime, but [he] accuses me of paddling down the river in the night – the need of a midnight letter was so urgent."

The Assembly duly approved the peace and alliance with Philip. Although this agreement was officially between Athens and her allies, and Philip and his allies, Cersebleptes and the cities of Halus and Phocis were not included.<sup>303</sup> As part of his indictment of Aeschines in 343, Demosthenes accused his fellow orator of deliberately excluding these three, as Philip's envoys Parmenio and Antipater had reportedly warned that inclusion of the Phocians in any agreement would violate Philip's recently agreed treaty with the Boeotians and Thessalians.<sup>304</sup> However, it is far from certain that the matter was ever raised. Firstly, the matter of Phocis and the Sacred War was in no way explicitly connected with the 'War for Amphipolis', as there is no obvious reason for Phocis to have arisen in discussions at Athens or Macedon. As mentioned above, association with Phocis was dangerous due to the accusations of sacrilege, and Demosthenes himself makes clear that the Athenians were aware of this:

"The second precaution...is to avoid giving the self-styled Amphictyones now assembled any call or excuse for a crusade against us."<sup>305</sup>

Moreover, Demosthenes undermines himself by changing the nature of his accusation at different points in his speech. His first accusation is that when the decision was first made to seek peace with Philip, before the First Embassy had even been dispatched, Aeschines and Philocrates attempted to draw up a treaty

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<sup>303</sup> Aesch. 2.61, 82-93, 3.69-74; Dem. 19.40-1, 174, 181, 321.

<sup>304</sup> Dem. 19.44, 47, 174, 278, 321.

<sup>305</sup> Dem. 5.14.

containing a clause explicitly excluding Phocis from any agreement. This supposedly provoked a furious public response, and

“when these men had failed to draw up the treaty, as they first tried to do...Philocrates [was] compelled by you to erase those words and write expressly “the Athenians and their Allies”.”<sup>306</sup>

However, later the claim changes to Philocrates and Aeschines having made the attempted exclusion at the time of the Second Embassy.<sup>307</sup> Such inconsistency makes the claim hard to believe, and Demosthenes further weakens his position by admitting that he has no evidence to support the accusation.

It is also worth noting that at almost exactly the same time as the Athenians were debating the peace, Philip invaded Thrace and defeated Cersebleptes.<sup>308</sup> Although news cannot have reached Athens, Demosthenes and the other envoy would undoubtedly have been aware of Philip’s planned campaign when they met him in Macedon. Attempting to include Cersebleptes in the peace and alliance would have been as purposeless as Phocis under such circumstances. Indeed, Aeschines claims that Demosthenes himself spoke against such inclusion when Cersebleptes’ ambassador arrived in Athens soon afterwards to make a last-minute plea.<sup>309</sup>

### (iii) The Second Embassy

Having approved the peace and alliance, the Athenians dispatched the same ten envoys to Macedon to oversee the taking of the oaths by Philip and his allies. However, they were forced to wait three months before Philip arrived at Pella following his conquest of Thrace.<sup>310</sup> They were joined in this time by embassies from Sparta, Thebes and Thessaly.<sup>311</sup> The concern of all was Philip’s plans regarding the conclusion of the Sacred War; the Spartans in particular, at risk from accusations of

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<sup>306</sup> Dem. 19.159.

<sup>307</sup> Dem. 19.278.

<sup>308</sup> Aesch. 2.90. See Ellis 1976, 110-11; Cawkwell 1978, 98.

<sup>309</sup> Aesch. 2.84 (Demosthenes speaking against inclusion), 3.73 (Thracian request).

<sup>310</sup> Dem. 19.57, 155.

<sup>311</sup> Aesch. 2.104, 108, 112, 136; Dem. 9.11. Both describe it as “the whole of Greece” being present.

sacrilege through association with Phocis, would have been keen to gain assurances of protection from the Boeotians. This they apparently gained, on condition that they did not become involved in Philip's plans for central Greece.<sup>312</sup>

When Philip did return to Pella, he further delayed his and his allies' taking the oath to seal the treaty with Athens, and instead requested all the envoys accompany him into Greece to aid him in settling a dispute between the cities of Pharsalus and Halus. Only when the parties reached Pherae, three days' march from Thermopylae, did Philip and his allies take the oath to seal the peace.<sup>313</sup> Thus the Athenian envoys returned home having ended a conflict, but "to an atmosphere heavy with the fear of war."<sup>314</sup>

A debate has arisen amongst modern scholars concerning Philip's intentions with regard to the close of the Sacred War, and in particular the role he hoped Athens to play in it and the aftermath. The issue has concerned whether the submission of Phocis, and Philip's apparent attempt to prevent full Athenian awareness until the last possible moment by delaying his taking the oath was part of his genuine plan, or a carefully planned façade that hid an intention to abandon his Boeotian allies in favour of Athens. The chief proponent of the latter idea, M. M. Markle, has argued that

"Philip had two alternative plans in 346. 'Plan A' was with the aid of the Athenians to turn on Thebes. By this move, he would reduce the power of the second greatest city in Greece and thus eliminate the possibility of a combination of Athens and Thebes, which might be sufficiently powerful to block his ambitions. If 'Plan A' failed because of a lack of Athenian co-operation, 'Plan B' would be adopted. 'Plan B' was to satisfy his existing allies, especially Thebes, by landing hard on the Phocians."<sup>315</sup>

The method would be that Philip would announce a policy of leniency towards the great majority of the Phocians, with punishment reserved for Phalaecus and his mercenaries. By this Philip would confirm Athenian support for him, as Athens would

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<sup>312</sup> Dem. 19.76.

<sup>313</sup> Dem. 19.152, 158, 175.

<sup>314</sup> Buckler 1989, 137.

<sup>315</sup> Markle 1974, 253. Cf. 1981, 79.

have been eager to punish the man who withdrew the Phocian invitation to take control of Thermopylae. It would also provoke a furious Thebes into attacking him, to which the Athenians would respond with a surprise attack in the rear. Once Thebes had capitulated Athens and Philip would approach Thermopylae from both sides and capture Phalaecus in a pincer movement.

Markle's evidence for this is found primarily in the promises allegedly made by Aeschines to the Athenian Assembly upon the return of the Second Embassy. In 343 Demosthenes claimed that Aeschines reassured the populace, which was greatly concerned about Philip's proximity to Thermopylae, by announcing that

"...thanks to [Aeschines'] diplomacy...within two or three days you would hear the news of the beleaguering of Thebes, independently of the rest of Boeotia, of the repopulation of Thespieae and Plataea [both previously destroyed by Thebes], and of the recovery of Apollo's treasure, not from the Phocians, but from the Thebans, who had planned the seizure of the temple."<sup>316</sup>

In his defence speech Aeschines denies having made such statements, but Markle convincingly rejects this, pointing to the fact that Demosthenes had made reference to them in his speech *On the Peace*, given only two months after the Second Embassy's return.<sup>317</sup> It is hard to accept, as Markle argues, that Demosthenes could have made such references so soon after the events in question unless they were accurate. The issue that inevitably rears its head, as it does with all Demosthenic and Aeschinic claims made regarding the events of 346, is one of potential alteration after original presentation. As J. Buckler has highlighted, published versions of ancient speeches frequently included material inserted after their original presentation, and were often revised to give a better impression than they did at the time.<sup>318</sup> *On the Peace's* publication date is unknown, so it is always possible that Demosthenes introduced claims of promises by Aeschines to create an impression of continuity with *On the False Embassy* of 343 (which was itself probably revised before publication). However, given that the claims appear in the opening sections

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<sup>316</sup> Dem. 19.20-1. Cf. 22-3, 35, 39, 42, 53, 63, 74, 106, 112, 220, 325-7.

<sup>317</sup> Markle 1974, 253.

<sup>318</sup> Buckler 2000, 148f.

of *On the Peace* it is difficult to believe that they were not present in the original version, as they clearly occupy an important place in the speech's message.

In addition to this, the idea of Aeschines having made such claims to the Assembly is consistent with other statements made around the time; in his prosecution of Timarchus, delivered soon after *On the Peace* he says of Philip

"If in what he does towards us in the future he shall fulfil the promise of what he now says, he will make praise of him a safe and easy thing."<sup>319</sup>

Later in the same speech he also refers proudly to "the peace which was brought about by Philocrates and myself."<sup>320</sup>

Assuming then that Aeschines did make promises to the Assembly, Markle's interpretation is that the Athenian envoys had grasped the nature of Philip's 'Plan A,' and confirmed this to him with a strongly anti-Theban speech at Pella.<sup>321</sup> Aeschines advised Philip that "Thebes should be Boeotian, not Boeotian Theban;"<sup>322</sup> he argued that only Phalaecus and his mercenaries should be held to account for sacrilege, and the blameless populace go unpunished;<sup>323</sup> and he spoke in detail of the traditions of the Amphictyones, stressing in particular the laws stating that

"Men of ancient times swore that they would raze no city of the Amphictyonic states, nor shut them off from flowing water either in war or peace, [and] if anyone should violate this oath, they must march out against such a one and raze his cities."<sup>324</sup>

That Aeschines claimed "it was not right that we should overlook the fact that the cities in Boeotia were lying in ruins" is a clear signal that Thebes could and should be punished for her actions just as much as Phocis.<sup>325</sup> Upon returning to Athens, Philip had every reason to expect 'Plan A' to succeed. That it did not was entirely due to

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<sup>319</sup> Aesch. 1,169.

<sup>320</sup> Aesch. 1,174.

<sup>321</sup> Markle 1974, 259f.

<sup>322</sup> Aesch. 2.116, 119.

<sup>323</sup> Aesch. 2.117.

<sup>324</sup> Aesch. 2.114-6.

<sup>325</sup> Markle 1974, 259.

Demosthenes who, convinced that the greater long-term danger to Athens was Philip, was determined to retain the option of an alliance with Thebes against the Macedonian.<sup>326</sup> Thus when Philip sent a letter to his new Athenian allies requesting they march out to aid him in dealing with Phocis<sup>327</sup> – though in reality putting ‘Plan A’ into effect – Demosthenes persuaded the Athenians to stay behind their walls for fear of any army being sent out being taken hostage by a treacherous Philip. In support of this he could point to the still-unreturned Olynthian hostages, whose passage home Philip had promised vaguely would occur before the time of the Panathenaea.<sup>328</sup>

In this interpretation of Philip’s intentions Markle is joined by J. R. Ellis, who agrees that Philip’s working with the Thessalians and Boeotians against Phocis would result in the restoration of Thebes to a position of pre-eminence in Greece. Any alliance between Athens and Thebes presented, in Ellis’ view, the greatest threat to Philip, so avoiding any such union should be the king’s priority.<sup>329</sup> Ellis also assumes that the promises given to the Assembly by Aeschines must have come from Philip himself.<sup>330</sup> However, Demosthenes claimed multiple times in 343 that he heard no such promises from Philip.<sup>331</sup> Although this may be an untruth on his part to place the blame for misleading the Athenians entirely on Aeschines and Philocrates, no evidence suggests it was not the case.

The rebuttal of Markle and Ellis’ interpretation of Philip’s intentions in 346 has come chiefly from G. Cawkwell, who has raised several potential issues.<sup>332</sup> Firstly, there is the question of the Thessalians. If Philip were to have allowed the majority of Phocians to go unpunished, could Thessaly not be expected to react in the same way as it was apparently hoped Thebes would? The matter is a difficult one; Both Markle and Ellis have highlighted the fact that we Thebes to be substantially

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<sup>326</sup> Markle 1974, 257. Demosthenes had announced this feeling long before in his *Olynthiacs* (Dem. 1.25-6, 3.8).

<sup>327</sup> Aesch. 2.137; Dem. 19.51.

<sup>328</sup> Dem. 19.168.

<sup>329</sup> Ellis 1976, 90-124.

<sup>330</sup> Ellis 1982, 43-59.

<sup>331</sup> Dem. 19.37, 39, 42-43, 45, 48, 68.

<sup>332</sup> Cawkwell 1978a, 93-104; 1978b 108-113. Cf Kelly 1980, 64-83, esp. 64-5.

weakened they would very likely replace the city at the head of the Amphictyonic League,<sup>333</sup> and Markle has pointed to Demosthenes' assertion that the Thessalians "desired to become masters...of the *pylaea* and of affairs at Delphi."<sup>334</sup> However, Aeschines declares that at Pella the Thessalians were confident that Philip's next campaign would be "on their behalf".<sup>335</sup> Also, one should not underestimate the nature of anti-Phocian feeling within Thessaly. As Cawkwell puts it "the hatred was of an ancient origin [and] apart from the Locrians, who were neighbours of Phocis, the only member of the Amphictyony to support Thebes was Thessaly."<sup>336</sup> The ultimate interests of the Thessalians must remain uncertain then, but Markle is probably correct to emphasise the fact that Philip's influence was derived from exploiting inherent divisions in Thessaly, and supporting certain cities over others; Larissa and Pharsalus over Pherae and Halus are clear examples.<sup>337</sup> The fact that following the Sacred War the Thessalians received only control of one of the three forts at Thermopylae as compensation strongly suggests Philip was not under substantial pressure from them.<sup>338</sup>

Cawkwell also highlights the apparent reliance of the success 'Plan A' on Athenian land forces being able to defeat those of Thebes. Until Thebes was defeated Philip was forced to wait to the west of Thermopylae, unable to pass into central Greece without Athenian assistance in trapping Phalaecus.<sup>339</sup> Here Markle's response is less convincing; an Athenian army had stopped Philip at Thermopylae in 352 following his victory at the Crocus Plain, but it does not obviously follow that he would have thereafter thought of them as a formidable enough force to defeat the army of Thebes, the most powerful city in central and southern Greece.<sup>340</sup> However, Athens was presumably meant to operate with the element of surprise, and the Thebans were sufficiently exhausted by the war with Phocis that they were forced to

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<sup>333</sup> Ellis 1976, 102; Markle 1982, 78f.

<sup>334</sup> Dem. 5.23.

<sup>335</sup> Aesch. 2.136.

<sup>336</sup> Cawkwell 1978a, 102. See Diod. 16.30.4.

<sup>337</sup> Larissa: Dem. 1.12, 8.59. 9.12, 10.10; Diod 16.14.2. 31.6, 35.1-2. Pharsalus: Dem. 19.36, 39, 163.

<sup>338</sup> Dem. 5.23, 6.22.

<sup>339</sup> Cawkwell, 1978a, 102f.

<sup>340</sup> Markle 1981, 79. On the aftermath of the Battle of the Crocus Plain, see Diod. 16.39.3.



turn to Philip to bring it to a close. In addition, Markle suggests that the Athenian navy may well have been expected to ferry Macedonian forces around to the east of Thermopylae to strengthen their own army.<sup>341</sup> Whilst there is no evidence to support this, there is no reason why it could not have been considered.

Ellis and Markle's case is thus indeed a compelling one. Perhaps the element most in its favour is the fact that it offers an explanation for Philip's insistence on an alliance with Athens as well as a peace agreement. In essence, Philip's long-term aim was an assault on the Persian empire, in which an alliance with Athens was crucial. Ellis and Markle differ slightly in their reasoning; for the former an alliance with Athens meant access to its powerful fleet, which was vital for any successful expedition into Asia Minor.<sup>342</sup> For the latter, the focus was ensuring that there was no chance of any rebellion or resistance in Greece whenever he began such a campaign.<sup>343</sup>

Ellis' interpretation must surely be rejected however. J. Buckler has made the point that an alliance with a city, which had for over a decade been his enemy, would not simply grant Philip automatic access to its fleet; it is far more likely that he would need to dominate Athens to achieve this.<sup>344</sup> Furthermore, Buckler claims, there is no reason to think Philip sought the fleet. His son, Alexander, overcame the threat of the Persian navy by assaulting its various bases by land, and largely avoiding naval engagements. This latter point is not certain however; it does not automatically follow that just because Alexander did one thing, Philip planned to the same. It is perfectly fair to assume that, lacking any serious naval forces of his own, Philip would have looked to secure those of Athens in expectation of moving against Persia.

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<sup>341</sup> Markle 1981, 79.

<sup>342</sup> Ellis 1978a, 49.

<sup>343</sup> Markle 1974, 267f.

<sup>344</sup> Buckler 1989, 123f.

A point that offers greater support for Buckler's argument is the timing. It is difficult to believe that in 346 Philip was already planning a Persian expedition.<sup>345</sup> For such a campaign to be considered Philip would have had to be sure that no problems would arise in Europe once he crossed the Hellespont. As has been said, Athens had been an enemy for over ten years, and Philip had only just brought Thrace under control. In this context Markle's interpretation – that Philip certainly sought to cross to Asia eventually, but in 346 was concerned with ensuring no such uprisings could ever occur – seems preferable. However, an alternative theory offers a more immediate explanation for Philip's insistence on an alliance with Athens. Buckler has pointed to the fact that Philip first made it known he would welcome peace immediately after the fall of Olynthus.

"As events would soon prove, Philip had poised his army for a massive invasion of eastern Thrace. The Athenian fleet posed a considerable threat to his goals here, for it could with virtual impunity intervene to imperil his lines of communication with Macedonia, to reinforce various points along the Thracian coast, or to engage him directly...Moreover, since the Athenians were allies of the Thracians about to be attacked, Philip must make a separate peace with Athens in the hope of dividing the two...In brief, Philip planned to neutralise the Athenian navy by diplomacy."<sup>346</sup>

Such an explanation is greatly strengthened by the fact that it can point to definite events that occurred in the immediate aftermath of the First Athenian Embassy. Markle and Ellis' interpretations, irrespective of how well they are ultimately based on an assumption that Philip had on a future Persian campaign – which finds no support in any of the sources.

This is not to say one cannot question Buckler's theory. An immediate problem arises concerning the promises Aeschines made to the Athenian Assembly upon the Second Embassy's return. It has been established that they were almost certainly not an invention by Demosthenes;<sup>347</sup> thus if Philip had no intention of abandoning Thebes, refounding Thespieae and Plataea, and allowing Phocis to go unpunished, and presumably gave no impression that he would, why did Aeschines

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<sup>345</sup> *Contra* Cawkwell 1978b, 111.

<sup>346</sup> Buckler 1989, 124.

<sup>347</sup> See above, p79-80.

suggest that he did? Unfortunately all one can say with reasonable certainty is that Philip never promised anything to the Athenians.<sup>348</sup> The options would appear to be either that Aeschines invented the promises himself, or that others had given him reason to think they would be fulfilled. The latter would seem more likely; such an impression would have to have come from those close to the king, and thus could well have occurred whilst the ambassadors waited at Pella. Unfortunately the lack of evidence means that further reliable insight is impossible to gain. The best interpretation in this frustrating situation is perhaps that, aware that Philip's earlier letter had promised "benefits," and desperate to believe anything that would allow Athens to not end up abandoning her ally to Philip and the Boeotians, Aeschines seized upon whatever he had been told, irrespective of how likely it seemed.

Such guilt for abandoning Phocis is inherent in the accusations of Demosthenes in 343. By this time Phocis had been taken and by the order the Amphictyonic Council, its citizens dispersed and saddled with payments of 60 talents to Delphi each year.<sup>349</sup> All Boeotian cities that had allied with it had been destroyed and their citizens enslaved.<sup>350</sup> There was never a chance of persuading Philip to include Phocis in Athens' alliance with him, yet Demosthenes accuses Aeschines and Philocrates of preventing it. Such actions suggest guilt at the situation, despite the fact that to have sided with Phocis would have doomed Athens to complete isolation and maybe even destruction.

Such feeling can also be observed in Aeschines' speech at Pella. If one assumes the Athenians had indeed not received any impression of a change in Philip's allegiance, the context of Aeschines' speech changes entirely. Rather than a cryptic message of comprehension and acceptance of 'Plan A,' it is a clear plea for leniency. The emphasis on Thebes' supposed illegal razing of other Boeotian cities is

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<sup>348</sup> As stated by Dem. 19.37, 39, 42-43, 45, 48, 68. If he had, and had failed to deliver on them, Demosthenes would surely have seized the opportunity to denigrate him for it. Instead, he places the blame for such promises squarely at the feet of Aeschines and Philocrates.

<sup>349</sup> Phocian surrender: Dem. 19.62; Diod. 16.59.3. Its being handed over to the Council: Dem. 19.63, Diod. 16.59.4. Punishment: Diod. 16.60.2.

<sup>350</sup> Aesch. 2.141.

intended not to give reason for an assault on its forces, but to downplay the severity of Phocis' crimes.<sup>351</sup>

Soon after the Second Embassy's return, Philip sent two letters requesting his new allies send out forces to aid him in bringing the Sacred War to a close.<sup>352</sup> That the Athenians chose to follow Demosthenes' warnings that any army sent out risked being seized by Philip and the Thebans on charges of sacrilege so soon after Aeschines' suggestions that the opposite would occur demonstrates they saw his claims as unrealistic, desperate hopes. With Theban support Philip did not need help from Athens in gaining passage to central Greece or securing Phocis' surrender. The request was a test of Athens' loyalty to its new ally. By staying behind their walls they, like Sparta, confirmed their abandonment of Phocis and avoided the fate of the Boeotian cities that had supported Phocis.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> Aesch. 2.114-117, 122.

<sup>352</sup> Dem. 19.51; Aesch. 2.137.

<sup>353</sup> Buckler 1989, 138f.

#### IV. Conclusions

The purpose of this essay was to gain insight into the nature of Philip's relations with Athens from the start of his reign until 346. Specifically, the question was whether a fair assessment of his aims could be obtained from the surviving source material.

It would seem that Philip's attitude towards Athens in the period 359-346 is characterised by deception, and by the vague promises of much, but the delivery of very little. As the outset of his reign, when he was most desperate, Philip withdrew Macedonian forces from Amphipolis. The move cost him little – the forces were most likely required to supplement those few he had left following his brother's crushing defeat at the hands of the Illyrians – but successfully undermined Athenian support for the pretender Argeus. This represents arguably the only example of Philip genuinely offering the Athenians something, as if they had acted on his withdrawal it would have been difficult for him to dislodge them from the city. Thereafter, with his position stronger, Philip always promised one thing but delivered, if anything, another.

Immediately after he had secured his throne from rival claimants and threatening neighbours, this took the form of outright deception. When he acted where Athens had not and recaptured Amphipolis, his immediate promise to the Athenians was that he would once again withdraw. The impression in letters sent to the Assembly was that he desired Athenian friendship. His move, instead of fulfilling his promise, was to attack Pydna, demonstrating that the whole image as a façade, maintained to buy him the time to obtain an alliance with the Chalcidian League. In this he circumvented a potential union between the league and Athens.

The objective early on then was to dislodge Athens from its holdings in the north Aegean. As these represented direct threats to Philip outright deception was employed. Thereafter, with his position and borders more secure, he could afford to

be subtler. When Olynthus fell to Macedonian siege, having thought better of its alliance and turned to Athens, Philip let it be known that would welcome peace. The indication that Athens should come to terms took the form of both a carrot and a stick. The taking of Athenian forces as hostages when the rest of the population was sold into slavery gave the impression of genuineness; in this he repeated his sparing of the Athenian cleuruchs when Potidaea was captured and turned over the Chalcidians. However, the fate of the city's population gave an altogether sterner warning of what might eventually occur should his overtures be rejected.

The peace itself was extremely basic in its terms; Philip did not seek in any way to exploit the fact that Athens had singularly failed to even offer a serious military challenge to the Macdeonian. Indeed, Philip enjoyed the luxury of, during the siege of Olynthus, of being so unthreatened by the newly arrived Athenian reinforcements that he could move to put down a revolt at Pherae. The question therefore inevitably arises of why Philip took the time to seek peace when he did, and why he also demanded an alliance.

As has been seen, there are differing interpretations amongst scholars. However, it is far more in keeping with what had gone before that Philip had an immediate aim, and by seeking peace and an alliance was concerned primarily with ensuring Athens could do nothing to prevent it. This can be found in the form of Thrace, which Philip attacked immediately after outlining his terms to the First Athenian Embassy. The timing of this allowed him to conduct his campaign before the Athenians could react – news of Cersebleptes' defeat came just as the Athenians had voted to accept the terms – and whilst they were unwilling to, busy as they were considering the question of peace. The letter that followed the envoys to Athens, deliberately vague in its promise of "benefit," served to ensure this situation, nullifying the potential danger the Athenian navy posed to Philip's lines of communication.

Such a reading of matters is preferable to the alternative interpretation; that Philip sought to abandon his Theban allies and their cause in favour of an alliance with Athens. Although there is much to recommend such a theory in principal, it is undermined by the fact that its fundamental assumption – that Philip was already acting with a potential Persian invasion in mind – is completely unsupported. In addition, there is no evidence that the matter of Phocis or the Sacred War ever formed part of Philip's negotiations with the Athenians. Only with the Thracian campaign complete did Philip turn his attention fully to this matter, and only then did Athens' allegiance to Phocis become a potential issue. By this time it was academic however; although any action on Athens' part was a potential breach of the new alliance with Philip, such a move was pointless due to the king's siding with the Boeotians.

Thus Philip's attitude towards the Athenians was not, it seems, guided by any overarching aim or policy. Instead his behaviour was one of outward friendship, with the intention of deceiving them long enough to effect whatever campaign he had in mind before they could recognise his true intentions and react.





## The Murder of Philip II

### I. Introduction

The murder of Philip II, which occurred in 336 amid the celebration of a religious festival, and the wedding of his daughter and brother-in-law, is a fascinating and complex subject. The assassin was an Orestian, Pausanias, one of Philip's bodyguards and former pages. Despite the existence of a motive in the sources – Philip's failure to punish his general, Attalus, for abusing Pausanias – scholars both ancient and modern have suspected the involvement of others. This chapter will attempt to assess the motives for and likelihood of each potential conspirator's involvement.

First to be considered will be Philip's wife, Olympias, and son, Alexander. Shortly before his death, Philip married for a seventh time, taking as his bride the ward and possibly niece of Attalus. The remarks of the general at the wedding feast are reported in the sources to have enraged Alexander as they suggested his position as heir-apparent to Philip was under threat. Whether Attalus' remarks were intended in such a way, whether Alexander was indeed in the position of heir-apparent, and if so, whether his displacement was at all likely will be investigated in this section. Olympias' position at court, and the relationship between her and Philip will also be investigated, to see what, if anything, she enjoyed and stood to lose were Alexander's fears justified.

The next section will focus on those men who were executed following Alexander's accession, on a charge of involvement in Philip's death. Two brothers from the northern Macedonian kingdom of Lyncestis were so accused, whilst a third brother reportedly escaped punishment, despite being guilty, by being the first at court to publicly demonstrate support for Alexander in the aftermath of Philip's murder. In addition, Amyntas Perdicca, son of Perdiccas III and Philip II's nephew, was also executed, and two others, apparently his associates, Amyntas Antiochou

and Aristomedes of Pherae fled to the court of Darius. This section will attempt to discern firstly the motives for such men to have been involved in such a conspiracy, and secondly whether any or all of them were actually guilty of the charges of treason.

The final section will assess Pausanias himself, his motives, and the likelihood of his having acted alone rather than with the encouragement or assistance of others. The events that led to Attalus' abuse of the Orestian are distinctly suspicious, involving Pausanias' driving to suicide an identically named colleague due to Philip favouring the latter over the former as a lover. The timing of this is confused, which has led some modern scholars to suspect a lengthy gap between Attalus' abusing Pausanias as revenge for his namesake's suicide, and Pausanias' murder of Philip for not punishing Attalus. As a result the idea that others were involved in reawakening Pausanias' grievances and encouraging him to finally take action against the king has seemed attractive. Whether such interpretations are justified will be the focus of this section.

## II. Alexander & Olympias

### (i) Heir Apparent?

It has commonly been assumed by modern scholars that Alexander was, until Philip's marriage to Cleopatra in 337, the unquestioned heir to the throne of Macedon.<sup>354</sup> Indeed, the presumption has formed the basis of theories, both ancient and modern, connecting Alexander and Olympias with Philip's murder.<sup>355</sup>

The Assembly of the Macedones, the citizen council, selected Macedonian kings on the basis of acclamation.<sup>356</sup> An endorsement from the previous king would very likely have been enough to earn this support, but such a recommendation was in no way limited by the concept of primogeniture. Good relations between Philip and Alexander would thus have been important. Care for his son's welfare is certainly evident in Philip's hiring of Aristotle as Alexander's tutor in 343, when the boy was 13.<sup>357</sup> If Alexander were only to learn academic subjects, tutors would have sufficed. However, the apparently unparalleled choice of a renowned philosopher for him demonstrates not only a wish to give Alexander the finest academic upbringing, but also to ensure that he was educated on a wider range of matters, something surely done with succession in mind.<sup>358</sup>

This education ended in 340 when Philip, before departing for Byzantium and Perinthus, summoned Alexander to Pella and granted him charge of the Royal Seal.<sup>359</sup> Such an appointment was essentially that of regent as it allowed Alexander to conduct day-to-day business at court.<sup>360</sup> The regency implies at the very least that Philip wished to test Alexander with further responsibility, or that he already trusted him with it. By extension, this suggests an interest by Philip in Alexander eventually

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<sup>354</sup> For example Badian 1963, 244; Bosworth 1993, 19; Ellis 1981, 129f; Hamilton 1965, 120 and 1973, 32; Hammond 2004, 6-7.

<sup>355</sup> Just. 9.7.3; Plut. *Alex.* 9.4.

<sup>356</sup> Hammond 1979, 152f. See also 1989, 21-4, 60-70, 166-70.

<sup>357</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 7.1-2.

<sup>358</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 7-8.

<sup>359</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9.1

<sup>360</sup> Hamilton 1969, 22.

handling the role fully. This is supported by presence of Antipater as only an advisor,<sup>361</sup> even though he had previously acted as regent himself.<sup>362</sup>

Philip's sending for Alexander soon after to be involved in the Scythian conflicts that followed the failed sieges at Byzantium and Perinthus<sup>363</sup> suggests a wish to give his son experience in the field. This again strengthens the idea of Alexander being Philip's intended heir. Such intentions are even more evident in Alexander's involvement at Chaeronea two years later, when he commanded the Companion Cavalry,<sup>364</sup> and afterwards, when he, with Antipater and Alcimachus, accompanied the ashes of the dead Athenians back to their home city.<sup>365</sup> Whilst there are other aspects to be considered below, an initial examination would seem to demonstrate both Philip's keenness for his son succeeding him, and his faith in Alexander's ability to successfully do so.<sup>366</sup>

## (ii) Queen of Queens?

It has also been commonly held that any involvement Olympias had in her husband's murder was inspired by Philip's marriage to Cleopatra in 337. Such a union, it has been held, threatened her position as foremost of Philip's multiple wives within the Macedonian court. Thus it is appropriate to assess whether her position was as has been suggested and if so, how secure she was in it.

There is an unfortunate lack of evidence for Olympias' standing at court during Philip's reign. Her few appearances in the sources are very likely influenced by her actions and those of others during and after Alexander's reign. For less biased indications of her position, one should consider the possibility of any affection in her marriage to Philip. As this was something usually absent from ancient unions, the

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<sup>361</sup> As implied by Isoc. Ep. 4. Cf. Plut. *Alex.* 9.1. Schachermeyer 1973, 93 n. 74 argues that Theopompus *FGrH* 115 F217 shows Antipater was absent at least some of the time.

<sup>362</sup> During Philip's campaign against the Thracians from 342. Cf. Berve n. 94 for references.

<sup>363</sup> Just. 9.1.8.

<sup>364</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9.2.

<sup>365</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9.3.

<sup>366</sup> Badian 1963, 244 feels that Alexander was recognised as crown prince from a much earlier age, and such upbringing was to be expected as a result. Ellis 1981, 129 is of a similar opinion, citing Isoc. Ep. 5.

presence of such emotion could have led to her being more prominent at court than other wives, and perhaps even other males. For the same reason, one should also attempt to assess the significance of her being the mother to Alexander.

Plutarch claims that:

...Philip fell in love with Olympias...at the time when they were both initiated into the mysteries at Samothrace. He was then a young man and she an orphan, and after obtaining the consent of her brother Arybbas, Philip betrothed himself to her.<sup>367</sup>

That an engagement or some similar understanding was arranged is not impossible. However, it must have taken place between 365 and 361 if it occurred at all, as before then Philip was a hostage at Thebes,<sup>368</sup> and afterwards he would have been over 21, and thus too old to be initiated into the cult.<sup>369</sup> Alexander was born in the summer of 356,<sup>370</sup> so it would seem likely that Olympias was married to Philip at least nine months earlier, probably at some point in 357. Athenian girls tended to be married between the ages of 14 and 18. If one uses this range as a guide, Olympias would have to have been born between 375 and 371. This would mean between 365 and 361 she could have been anywhere between six and fourteen years old. Even the latter is at the low end of the usual Athenian range, and given that Argead girls seem to frequently have married when distinctly older than fourteen,<sup>371</sup> it would seem perfectly possible that a future union was planned at or soon after the mysteries at Samothrace. E. Carney has argued that such an arrangement would not have been permitted as Philip's brother, Perdiccas III, was on the throne and feared Philip's political position being strengthened.<sup>372</sup> However, this is unconvincing as Philip demonstrated no such fears during his own reign when making the similar move of marrying his daughter, Cleopatra, to Olympias' brother, Alexander I of Epirus.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>367</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2.1.

<sup>368</sup> Diod. 15.67.4; Just. 6.9.6, 7.5.1.

<sup>369</sup> Hamilton 1965, 2.

<sup>370</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 3.5.

<sup>371</sup> Greenwalt 1988, 93-7.

<sup>372</sup> Carney 2006, 12.

<sup>373</sup> Just. 9.7.7.

The attendance of Olympias' uncle, Arrybas' suggests a political motive for the meeting's place, as does the site. Samothrace was an island with a cult that appears largely unknown to northern-western Greeks;<sup>374</sup> consequently the idea of a chance meeting that resulted in a whirlwind romance seems highly unlikely.

Whilst it is thus possible that such an arrangement occurred, it being based on affection would be contrary to usual marriage practice, where elites married for the procreation of heirs and the cementing of political arrangements.<sup>375</sup> In fact, an alternative motive for the arrangement can easily be found. Both Macedonia and Molossia had to contend with frequent incursions from Illyrian tribes; indeed, Philip came to the throne as a result of Perdiccas III's death in a crushing defeat to an Illyrian army in 359. Any arrangement that inspired strengthened opposition was thus beneficial to both.<sup>376</sup>

Plutarch's other attempt to demonstrate affection between Philip and Olympias is similarly unconvincing. He states that:

"At another time a serpent was seen stretched out at Olympias' side as she slept, and it was this more than anything else, we are told, which weakened Philip's passion and cooled his affection to her, so that from that time on he seldom came to sleep with her."<sup>377</sup>

Such an anecdote should be disregarded.<sup>378</sup> Quite apart from the fact that the serpent is supposedly Zeus in disguise,<sup>379</sup> the whole episode demands Philip to have publicly explained his 'loss of interest' at some point, which is surely unlikely.<sup>380</sup> The story is most likely a product of Alexander's visit to Siwah in 331:<sup>381</sup>

"When Alexander had crossed the desert and arrived at the shrine, the high priest of Ammon welcomed him on the god's behalf as a father greeting his son. Alexander's first question was to ask whether any of his father's murderers had escaped punishment. At this

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<sup>374</sup> Carney 2006, 13 n. 60.

<sup>375</sup> See Pomeroy 1975, 5-33 and Walcott 1987, 62f amongst others.

<sup>376</sup> Dell 1970, 115-26. Cf. Errington 1975, 49; Griffith 1979, 215.

<sup>377</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2.6.

<sup>378</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2.4. Develin 1981, 92; Fredricksmeyer 1990, 300 n. 3; Griffith 1979, 677 n. 3; Hamilton 1969, 4 and Heckel 1981, 52 all regard the story as having some element of truth, but fail to justify such beliefs.

<sup>379</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 3.1.

<sup>380</sup> Carney 1992, 171 n. 5.

<sup>381</sup> Carney 1992, 171 n. 5; Tarn, 1949, 353-4.

the high priest commanded him to speak more guardedly, since his father was not a mortal."<sup>382</sup>

Assertions of his divine origin can reasonably be seen to originate from this event, and it is in this context such an anecdote should surely be viewed.

It thus cannot be assumed then that any standing enjoyed by Olympias in the royal household prior to 337 was a result of affection between her and Philip. This is not to rule out all possibility of such attraction, but to state that nothing can be found to firmly indicate Philip and Olympias' feelings for each other either way.

What then of the idea of Olympias achieving a superior position to Philip's other wives due to being mother to Alexander? She was not Philip's first wife, nor his last. There seems to have been no official hierarchy or positions amongst the wives of a monarch in Macedon.

That the production of a suitable heir would give a wife a position superior to that of other spouses however is understandable. All such women were married, politics apart, for reasons of procreation; success, whether the child was male or female, was of great significance. Daughters at the very least could be married off to secure political alliances,<sup>383</sup> but a male child could succeed his father, and would elevate the mother's position further through her connection to the potential future king. That there was no alternative to Alexander, his stepbrother Arrhidaeus being mentally unfit for rule,<sup>384</sup> would only have strengthened any position Olympias held.

If one assumes from the above that Olympias enjoyed a position of superiority, how secure would she have been in it? As has been discussed, Philip began seriously to indicate his preference for Alexander as his heir in 340 when he appointed his son regent, and continued to make similar gestures until shortly before his death. There was no official position for Alexander to be appointed to that

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<sup>382</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 27.5. Cf. Diod. 17.51.1-3; Curt. 4.7.2-5. Just. 11.11.2 has Alexander sending men ahead to bribe the priest into giving such a greeting, but is alone in claiming so.

<sup>383</sup> For example, Philip married his daughter Cleopatra to Alexander of Epirus shortly before his death. On the alternative but incorrect suggestions for the union, see below, section (vi).

<sup>384</sup> Just. 13.2.11; Plut. *Alex.* 77.5. The latter's suggestion that Arrhidaeus' mental state developed as a result of poisoning by Olympias will be examined below. See Carney 2001, 63-9.

would officially confirm his being heir to the throne,<sup>385</sup> so his involvement at Chaeronea in 338, for example, was merely the latest and most public indication yet of Philip's intentions. This means Olympias may only have enjoyed whatever benefits resulted from Philip's apparent preference for Alexander being his heir for approximately three years. It could be argued that such a short period of time, particularly in what was by 337 around twenty years of marriage, could have prevented any serious feelings of security from developing in Olympias' mind. However, even in 337, Alexander's position was, seemingly unchallenged, and thus so presumably was hers. Any child of Cleopatra's would be of little concern for another 16 years at least, assuming it did not die in infancy. Olympias' position was dependent on that of her son, and whilst there seems little reason, Alexander still being a child, for her to have stood markedly above Philip's other wives until 340, her standing thereafter would surely have been distinctly apart. This at least seems to have faced little challenge at the time of the king's death.

### (iii) A New Wife

"And after all these, being violently in love, [Philip] married Cleopatra, the sister of Hippostratus and niece of Attalus. By bringing her also home to Olympias, he threw his life into confusion."<sup>386</sup>

In 337, despite all that had occurred since 340, Alexander's position was apparently undermined when Philip took a new wife.<sup>387</sup> It is alleged by several sources that his choice of bride was determined by falling violently in love. Such a move caused, Athenaeus suggests, insecurity at court, not least in the minds of Olympias and Alexander. They particularly feared Philip's personal attachment to his new wife passing to any son born to her, as the infant could well threaten Alexander's position. The frictions connected with this marriage and their potential interpretations will be discussed below, but first one should examine why Philip should have married again, and his choice of bride.

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<sup>385</sup> Carney 1992, 172.

<sup>386</sup> Ath. 13.557d.

<sup>387</sup> Just. 9.7.2-3; Plut. *Alex.* 9.4.



Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* claims that Philip αἰεὶ κατὰ πόλεμου ἐγάμει, or "always contracted marriages to do with or 'in relation to' war".<sup>388</sup> His source for Philip's marriages and wives was Satyrus<sup>389</sup> and detailed analysis of this claim is crucial, as only Athenaeus makes it, and as Philip's marriage to Cleopatra supposedly represented a change from such a policy, much of the supposed uproar that followed hangs on it. One should study Athenaeus' entire claim, which in fact runs

"Philip of Macedon did not, like Darius (the one overthrown by Alexander, who, though fighting got the survival of his whole empire took 360 concubines around with him, as Dicaerchus recounts of the third book of the *History of Greece*), take women along to war, Philip rather took on each occasion used to contract marriages to do with war."

Although Satyrus was frequently guilty of focussing on scandal at the Macedonian court, he would have had no cause to invent reasons for Philip's marriages. It would therefore be fair to assume that Athenaeus' account is to be relied upon. However, A. Tronson has argued that whilst the first half of this sentence was written by Satyrus and copied verbatim, the second was an insertion by Athenaeus.<sup>390</sup> The argument is that in the first part Satyrus outlines what Philip did not do and the second is Athenaeus' presumption of what he did.

As has been previously outlined, Athenaeus' reference to Philip's marriages occurs during an extended conversation concerning the virtues of married women. As part of this, book 13 features a discussion of bigamy. A distinction is made between the tolerance of 'barbarian' wives for their husbands' concubines and monogamy, and the intolerance of Greek wives for such things.<sup>391</sup> Philip is presented as traditionally having married in connection with wars, but by marrying Cleopatra for reasons of affection, he upset the established order that had formed around his polygamous, but politically motivated lifestyle, and 'threw his life into confusion.' The claim of Athenaeus' interpolation of Satyrus' text therefore stands or falls on whether, in seeking to make Satyrus' version of events fit his agenda, Athenaeus

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<sup>388</sup> Ath. 13.557b. Associated with αἰεὶ, κατὰ πόλεμου cannot mean 'in wartime' (Errington 1975, 41 n. 5). Hammond 1992, 41 n.39 is similarly correct to highlight the impracticality that a translation of 'with each war' would demand. Ellis 1981, 111 'for military purposes' is more acceptable.

<sup>389</sup> Ath. 13.557b-e = F21, Kumaniccki, 1929.

<sup>390</sup> Tronson 1984, 120ff. Cf. Carney 2006, 21ff.

<sup>391</sup> Ath. 13.556c.

edited out or played down certain aspects of the former's narrative. The only way to determine this, and thus whether Philip actually did always marry for reasons connected with warfare, is to examine the summary that follows on the *Deipnosophistae* of Philip's marriages.

The first point of note is the lack of association of the marriages with specific conflicts; only the case of Philip's sixth wife, Meda, has any such connection:

"And then, when he [Philip] conquered Thrace, Cothelas, the king of the Thracians, came over to him bringing his daughter Meda and many gifts."

Given his prior statement, Athenaeus presumably expected the reader to assume an association with warfare in each case.<sup>392</sup> Whether this is justifiable however is far from certain. The first wife mentioned, Audata the Illyrian, ought to exemplify Athenaeus' claim, as he would hardly begin with an example that did otherwise.<sup>393</sup> As has been discussed, Philip's conflict with Illyria early on in his reign means that a resultant marriage is very likely.<sup>394</sup> Concerning the second wife however, only the briefest description is given:

"And then [Philip] married Phila, the sister of Derdas and Machatas."

Such a cursory mention could be seen to suggest a situation that did not fit Athenaeus' claim of marriage to do with warfare.<sup>395</sup> However, the lack of further explanation and Phila's absence from the other sources is not proof of this, so one is forced to leave the matter unresolved. Philip reportedly married the Thessalians Nicesipolis of Pherae and Philinna of Larisa because "he wanted to appropriate the Thessalian people as well, on grounds of kinship." One can again say little other than, noting the lack of any mention of warfare in connection with either union.

The political motives for the marriage to Olympias are given – "he acquired the kingdom of the Molossians" – but once more, there is no mention of any conflict. It is also very obvious that Athenaeus makes no mention of Philip and Olympias'

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<sup>392</sup> Tronson 1984, 121.

<sup>393</sup> Ellis 1981, 111.

<sup>394</sup> Diod. 16.14.

<sup>395</sup> Ellis 1981, 112.

meeting in Samothrace or the affectionate origins of their marriage that Plutarch gives, despite both authors probably using Satyrus as a source.<sup>396</sup> The obvious assumption is that Athenaeus left it out of his account, as the idea of a love match would clash with his agenda of only the Cleopatra marriage being a love match, and causing uproar as a result.

What appears from Athenaeus' list then, is the lack of support for his claim of Philip marrying only in connection with warfare, to the point where he seems to have deliberately omitted parts of Satyrus' narrative to make the facts fit his contention.<sup>397</sup> This notion finds support in the fact that a wider examination of the *Deipnosophistae* demonstrates a propensity on Athenaeus' part to edit his source material.<sup>398</sup>

Armed with such knowledge, what can one say about Philip's marriage to Cleopatra? For Athenaeus it was a love match, an opinion he shares with Plutarch.<sup>399</sup> Whilst some scholars have accepted this view,<sup>400</sup> it possesses a problem. Plutarch claims that the match was unsuitable because Cleopatra "was far too young for him", but at 46, the idea of Philip as an old man conceiving an "unreasonable passion" in his dotage is surely unreasonable. Athenian men typically married from the age of 30 onwards, a point at which they became eligible to vote. For a Macedonian to be judged too old to marry at only 16 years older would be strange indeed. At any rate, no accusations of his being too old surround his recent marriage to the no doubt similarly aged Meda. It seems perfectly feasible that Plutarch, or his source, sought an irrational explanation for something that seemed itself irrational,<sup>401</sup> firstly because of the lack of political benefit that resulted from the match and secondly because of the problems that arose subsequently. A clear-thinking man would have seen this, so Philip must have lost his senses and fallen

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<sup>396</sup> See Tronson 1984, 124 n. 52.

<sup>397</sup> Athenaeus' treatment of Philip and Cleopatra's wedding banquet, and Alexander's quarrel with Attalus will be discussed below in section (iv).

<sup>398</sup> Tronson 1984, 125 n. 54.

<sup>399</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9.4.

<sup>400</sup> Borza, 1992, 208; Fredricksmeyer 1990, 301; Hammond 1994, 172, although 2004, 22-3 has him less certain.

<sup>401</sup> Carney 1992, 173-4.

madly in love. The fact is however that such problems can, as will be demonstrated, be seen to result not from the match itself, but rather others' responses to it, and in turn the responses of others to them.<sup>402</sup> Also, perfectly sensible reasons can be presented for the union.

Despite six previous marriages, Philip had just four surviving daughters by 337, and more importantly, only two sons. Of the latter, only Alexander would have been judged fully capable of succeeding his father, as the other, Arrhidaeus, was mentally disabled.<sup>403</sup> Philip's most recent marriage had proved childless, and his previous five wives were most likely too old to provide further children.<sup>404</sup> This might not have been such an issue, were Philip not planning to launch himself against the Persian empire, most likely taking the heir apparent along with him, thus significantly increasing the chances of another heir being needed. The marriage of Amyntas, Philip's nephew, to Cynanne, his daughter by Audata<sup>405</sup> suggests the matter of succession was on the king's mind,<sup>406</sup> as does the union of Olympias' brother, Alexander of Epirus, to her daughter, Cleopatra.<sup>407</sup>

If a new wife was needed, why Cleopatra? Philip must have known the choice of a Macedonian bride would inevitably create tensions and unease between the families and factions at court. Despite this, such a move makes a certain amount of sense. If procreation were the primary aim, the Macedonian court would have been the first place for Philip to seek a bride. His departure to Persia was beckoning, so swiftness of choice would have been necessary; it was surely much simpler to choose from the immediate surroundings of the court at which Philip was present at the time than go through the no doubt more lengthy rigmarole of finding an available sister or daughter of an allied ruler.

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<sup>402</sup> See section (iv)

<sup>403</sup> Carney 2001.

<sup>404</sup> None of Philip's marriages can be dated exactly, but given Alexander's birth was in the summer of 356, the union with Olympias was probably in the summer or autumn of 357. Thus the marriage was around 20 years old by 337, and Olympias most likely approaching 40. As she was Philip's fifth wife, it is reasonable to assume her predecessors were even older.

<sup>405</sup> Arr. succ. Al. 22; Polyæn. 8.60.

<sup>406</sup> Hammond 1980b, 167.

<sup>407</sup> Diod. 16.91.4. For the move's potential role as a reconciliatory or even cautionary measure by Philip following Olympias' removal to Molossia, see section (iv).

Cleopatra was the niece and ward of Philip's general Attalus.<sup>408</sup> The total absence of Attalus from the sources prior to Cleopatra's marriage has led to questioning of his standing at court, and the extent to which the union represented an advance for his family.<sup>409</sup> The potential political influences of Attalus will be examined below, so it is suffice to say here that he was subsequently sent to establish a Macedonian bridgehead in Asia with Parmenio,<sup>410</sup> a responsibility that would not have been given to one who was in any way distrusted.

Thus there seems no immediate reason to question the status of Attalus' family. If Philip had married one whose status was markedly below his own, mention would surely have been made of the fact by the sources, if for no other reason than to strengthen the claim of a love match. The appointment of Parmenio as Attalus' companion in leading Philip's advance force into Asia shows that this was not a position for a rank outsider, only there because of his connections. It is also worth noting that Attalus apparently married one of Parmenio's daughters shortly before departing on his command; a definite level of social standing would have been required to allow such a match.<sup>411</sup>

It seems then that perfectly acceptable reasons can be found for Philip's marrying again, and for his choice of bride, without even considering the possibility that genuine attraction may well have been the key factor in Philip's choice. No evidence exists to reasonably contradict the image of Cleopatra as a woman of suitable age and social standing for Philip's next wife, conveniently positioned at the most obvious place for him to seek one.

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<sup>408</sup> Ath. 13.557d; Paus. 8.7.7; Plut. *Alex.* 9.6., though Just. 9.5.9 has Cleopatra as Attalus' sister. At any rate, he was certainly her guardian.

<sup>409</sup> Hamilton 1973, 40 appears to question the suitability of Cleopatra's social position, and Hammond 2004, 21 describes the marriage as 'introducing a commoner family into the royal circle.' Carney 1992, 174 suggests that the choice of Attalus' ward over a member of either Parmenio's or Antipater's families may have been made to prevent tension developing between the two should one be taken from a female rather than the other.

<sup>410</sup> Diod. 17.2.4.

<sup>411</sup> Curt. 6.9.17. See below, section (v).

#### (iv) Happiness Shattered?

There thus seems little reason for Alexander or Olympias to have been overly concerned by Philip's marrying Cleopatra. Almost immediately however, a spectacular breakdown in relations apparently occurred. The occasion was a banquet, most likely in late 337.<sup>412</sup> Such allegations require detailed examination as if true, they seriously undermine what has been presumed thus far about Philip's intentions and Alexander and Olympias' situations.

As Plutarch presents matters,<sup>413</sup> during the wedding feast Attalus drunkenly suggested that all Macedonians should pray for the birth of a legitimate successor. An infuriated Alexander replied, "What am I then, a bastard?" and threw a cup (specifically a *skyphos*) at Attalus. Furious with his son, Philip rose and drew his sword, but drunkenly tripped whilst advancing on Alexander. His son sarcastically quipped "This is a man set to cross from Europe to Asia, who can't even get from one couch to another." He then left immediately with his equally angry mother for Epirus, and thence on alone to Illyria.

Athenaeus' version is similar,<sup>414</sup> but has Attalus explicitly saying "Now legitimate princes and not bastards shall be born", with Alexander throwing a cup at him without responding verbally, and Attalus throwing another (this time a *poterion*) back. Notably, Philip makes no appearance. Alexander and Olympias again leave for Epirus and Illyria, though separately.

Justin's account is the least detailed<sup>415</sup> saying only that Alexander quarrelled with Attalus and then with Philip, who chased him with a sword and had to be dissuaded

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<sup>412</sup> Just. 9.5.8-9 says Attalus, Parmenio and Amyntas led the advanced Macedonian force to Persia shortly after Philip's marriage, in spring 336. As will be seen in section (v), Alexander's involvement with the Carian satrap Pixodarus most likely occurred following the force's arrival in Asia, by which time Alexander must have returned from his time in Illyria (see below). To allow for this, the wedding most likely occurred in late 337, with Alexander's time in Illyria being over the winter of 337/6.

<sup>413</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9.4-5.

<sup>414</sup> Ath. 13.557 d-e.

<sup>415</sup> Just. 9.7.3-5.

from killing him. Alexander again left with Olympias for Epirus, before travelling alone on to Illyria.

The three versions agree absolutely on only two things. First, that Philip failed to support his son against Attalus' insults; indeed, two of the accounts have him siding with his father-in-law and against his son. Second, the fact that Alexander and Olympias left Macedon immediately as a result of the banquet's events.<sup>416</sup> Detailed analysis of each source's origins should be conducted to assess exactly which aspects and variations are to be trusted.

As has been previously mentioned, Athenaeus helpfully states that amongst his sources he used a biography of Philip by the third century writer Satyrus.<sup>417</sup> Identifying Plutarch's and Justin's sources is more difficult. Their contexts, interests and biases are of great importance, but cannot be examined before a name is found, and in this the difficulty lies. In his 1991 article examining the ultimate sources of Justin's *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus*, N. G. L. Hammond concluded that the similarities between Justin 9.7.1-4 and Athenaeus 13.557 d-e meant both authors must have used Satyrus as their source for such passages.<sup>418</sup> The argument has much merit; both extracts have Alexander quarrelling with Attalus, and the throwing of cups as part of the disagreement. The lack of details such as Philip's drawn sword in Justin's account could well be due to the work being an epitome; Justin himself confesses to including "what was most worth knowing...and [omitting] what was neither pleasurable to learn nor necessary as an example."<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> Carney 2006, 31; cf. 1992, 175.

<sup>417</sup> Ath. 13.557 b.

<sup>418</sup> Hammond 1991, 496-508. Cf. 1994 14-15; 1983, 89f. Hammond's argument is confusing however; having attributed the passage to Satyrus (p407-8, 502), he goes on to include it in a group of excerpts that he ascribes to Cleitarchus (p500), a move that goes unexplained (p503-4). When the passage is referred to again, it has become 9.8.1-3 rather than 9.7.1-3. Presumably the former is the extract Hammond was referring to all along, with the latter always meant to be attributed to Cleitarchus. Putting the confusion down to typographical error is difficult however, as the mistake occurs multiple times and recurs in Hammond's *Philip of Macedon* (1994), 14-15. It may be that confusion on the part of the author during writing is to blame.

<sup>419</sup> Just. *Preface*.

An issue remains however. Justin's version of events shares with Plutarch's an explicit association of Philip with Attalus' views, as in both the king draws his sword against his son. As a result, it is possible that both Plutarch and Justin used the same source.<sup>420</sup> If so, this creates a new problem. If Plutarch and Justin both have Philip siding actively with Attalus and against Alexander, how can they have come from the same source as Athenaeus, who has Philip doing nothing of the kind? An answer can perhaps be found in Plutarch and Justin's being concerned with Philip's murder, and explicitly linking the quarrel with it. Athenaeus' interest however was, as has been discussed, how Philip "threw his life into confusion" by marrying for non-political reasons. The idea of Philip upsetting his own household by drunkenly aggravating his son could be seen to detract from the idea of his marriage alone causing the problems. Given that the distinct possibility of Athenaeus' manipulating his source material has already been demonstrated one could suspect similar behaviour here. In short, all three could have used the same source material, but whilst Plutarch and Justin took Satyrus at his word, Athenaeus included only part of the account to make the events fit his work's agenda.

Other inconsistencies in the accounts do not seriously obstruct the idea of a common source. Who threw what cup first, like the different versions of Attalus' words or offered by Athenaeus and Plutarch, may well be the result of attempts to increase the dramatic effect of their respective accounts. Indeed, it is perfectly possible that both versions may have been completely invented, and Satyrus may have only related that a quarrel occurred, perhaps or perhaps not including the words 'bastard' (*nothos*) and 'legitimate' (*gnesion*).<sup>421</sup> Plutarch's addition of a sarcastic quip on Alexander's part could well be down to a wish to give the focus of his biography the 'last line in the scene' before departing.

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<sup>420</sup> Hammond *Philip*, 15.

<sup>421</sup> Carney 2006, 32 is correct to suggest that whilst most details of the quarrel might vary or suffer embellishment in the memories of those who were present, the use of such serious words to a person of Alexander's importance would be neither invented or forgotten, and therefore most likely to have occurred.



Assuming then that the three accounts came from the same source material, is it likely that the incident actually occurred? One can say first that any attempt to suggest that the argument and its details were all subsequently invented or exaggerated for ulterior reasons is to be rejected. J. R. Ellis has attempted to make such an argument, positing that it originated in 335/4 in connection with the execution of Attalus, the justification for which would otherwise have been “on shaky ground.”<sup>422</sup> However, as Carney has mentioned, many Macedonian nobles would have been present at the actual banquet in 337, and so would have known that Attalus had not criticised Alexander. Consequently, Alexander could hardly have hoped to convince them otherwise only two years later.<sup>423</sup>

Based on this, something presumably occurred, but what exactly, and why? The idea of a drunken argument is very possible.<sup>424</sup> The Macedonians were infamous in the Greek world for drinking their wine *akratos*, or undiluted, a practice that resulted in greater and swifter drunkenness.<sup>425</sup> Alexander’s murder of Cleitus in 328 at a banquet shows that drunken arguments certainly occurred at such occasions, and could escalate with potentially lethal consequences.<sup>426</sup> However, two issues arise. First, why would Attalus apparently provoke Alexander, and more importantly, what did he mean by such remarks? Second, why did Philip apparently side with Attalus, effectively endorsing his slurs on Alexander’s legitimacy as heir?

The reasoning behind Attalus’ ‘praying for heirs’ is itself easy enough to comprehend. His niece had just married the king of Macedon; that he would hope any son she might have would become king is understandable, however remote the possibility of it occurring. However, his choice of language is less easy to understand. Whether one uses Plutarch’s or Athenaeus’ version, Attalus can be seen to have questioned the legitimacy of Alexander’s claim to the throne. This has been

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<sup>422</sup> Ellis 1981, 110, 135. On Attalus’ execution, see below, section (v).

<sup>423</sup> Carney 1992, 175.

<sup>424</sup> Heckel 1981, 52.

<sup>425</sup> See Borza 1983, 46-50.

<sup>426</sup> Arr. 4.8.

interpreted as both a slur on Olympias' fidelity as a wife,<sup>427</sup> and on her non-Macedonian origins.<sup>428</sup> Both hypotheses demand investigation.

The idea of the drunken outburst representing an attack on Olympias' conjugal loyalty is easily dealt with. Only Justin offers any support for such a claim:

"For [Alexander's] mother, Olympias, had confessed to her husband, Philip, that it was not by him that she had conceived Alexander, but by a huge serpent. Moreover, shortly before his death, Philip, had publicly declared that Alexander was not his son, and had for that reason repudiated Olympias as guilty of adultery."<sup>429</sup>

To begin with, the idea of divorce is unique to Justin,<sup>430</sup> and can be put down to Greek misunderstanding of Philip's polygamy.<sup>431</sup> As for Philip's disowning of his son as a result of his mother's actions, the anecdote appears in the context of Alexander's visit to Siwah. As has been discussed above, the story of the snake is most likely a product of attempts to emphasise Alexander's divinity following the visit. Even if one does not assume this, there are more obvious problems with the story. As has been seen, Plutarch relates the same tale<sup>432</sup> but only has Philip losing interest in Olympias as a result, not treating the incident as adultery. More importantly, even if he had not spent considerable time and effort grooming Alexander as his heir, for Philip to have disowned the only visible successor he had would make no sense. Indeed, he continued to treat Alexander as his trusted lieutenant until his death. It is also worth noting that if Attalus is taken to be questioning Alexander's parentage, his claim that no legitimate sons had been born must be extended to Arrhidaeus too. This seems highly unlikely, as nothing exists in the sources to suggest his mother's fidelity was in question. More than anything else however, unless Olympias' fidelity was the subject of considerable suspicion within the Macedonian court, Attalus' remarks would surely have caused bemusement at the dinner table rather than struck a chord. The absence in the sources of accusations of adultery surely indicates that such an idea was not prevalent at court, and that Attalus may have meant something else.

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<sup>427</sup> Hamilton 1969, 24; Lane Fox 1973, 503; Bosworth 1988, 21. Cf. Carney 2006 153 n. 86.

<sup>428</sup> Badian 1963, 244-5; Hamilton 1965, 120; 1973, 40.

<sup>429</sup> Just. 11.11.3-5.

<sup>430</sup> See also Just. 9.5.9, 9.7.2.

<sup>431</sup> Ellis 1981, 118; Develin 1981, 93; Fears 1975, 126.

<sup>432</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2.4.

Perhaps then, as J. R. Hamilton and W. Heckel have suggested, he meant to question Alexander's legitimacy by disparaging Olympias' non-Macedonian origins.<sup>433</sup> Alexander's Asian wives apparently received little respect from Macedonian elites during his reign.<sup>434</sup> It is not impossible that such prejudices existed to some degree in the minds of Attalus and other individuals towards non-Macedonians. Even if this is what Attalus meant however, there is no evidence that there was widespread support for such a view.<sup>435</sup> This has not prevented the idea giving rise in some scholars' minds to the idea of an influential political faction at court, with the desire for a ruler of 'pure Macedonian blood' at its heart and Attalus at its head.<sup>436</sup>

Such a theory is a result of attempts to explain Philip's marriage to Cleopatra, Attalus' language at the banquet, his behaviour following Philip's death and Alexander's response to it. In its favour, it can point to several things. Shortly before his niece's wedding, Attalus had married a daughter of Parmenio;<sup>437</sup> consequently, as one historian would have it, "the two families looked like establishing a formidable junta at court."<sup>438</sup> Philip's marriage to Cleopatra could have been the result of pressure from such a faction. The appointment of the previously unheralded Attalus, her uncle, to joint command of Philip's advanced Asian force could be seen to show the new influence of the faction, not least because his co-commander was no other than his new father-in-law Parmenio.<sup>439</sup>

Such a theory sounds very attractive, but in terms of racial matters at least, unfortunately lacks evidence. Attalus' statement apart, there is no indication in the sources of any racial dislike of Olympias or objection to Alexander. However, the idea becomes much more plausible if one assumes that such a group was motivated purely by political ambition. If Cleopatra were to bear a son, and Alexander's position

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<sup>433</sup> Hamilton 1965, 120, cf. 1973, 40; Heckel 1981, 52 follows this view, but fails to give any explicit reasoning. See also Greenwalt 1989, 42; Carney 2006, 34-5, *Polygamy* 175.

<sup>434</sup> On Roxanne and Stateira for example, see Carney 2000, 106-9, 146-9.

<sup>435</sup> Badian 1963, 244-6 in particular has Alexander distinctly isolated at court. Cf. Hamilton 1965, 120-1.

<sup>436</sup> Badian 1963, 244-5; Hamilton 1965, 120; 1973, 40 in particular.

<sup>437</sup> Curt. 6.9.17.

<sup>438</sup> Green 1991, 88.

<sup>439</sup> Diod. 17.2.4.

as heir-apparent could be undermined, one or more members of the faction would stand an excellent chance of controlling the Macedonian throne as regent should Philip die whilst in Asia.

If such a faction existed, one might ask why had it apparently displayed no opposition to Alexander until now?<sup>440</sup> It is possible that it had only gained significant influence at court following the 'alliance' of Parmenio's and Attalus' families, but such a postulation relies on the latter being on the social and political sidelines at court prior to the marriage, something which cannot be assumed. Far from being evidence, Attalus' absence from the sources before Philip's involvement with Cleopatra can easily be put down to the sources' agendas. Justin was interested chiefly in Philip's career, not all the affairs of his court and its details, Athenaeus only in his marriages, and Plutarch primarily in Alexander. In addition, all three seemingly used Satyrus, whose work was a biography of Philip the man rather than a general history of his reign.<sup>441</sup> Attalus' lack of appearances can thus reasonably be understood without demanding an explicit reason for it.

#### (v) Attalus' Treason?

Attalus' actions following Philip's death demand investigation, as Diodorus claims that following the murder, Alexander saw him as a rival to the throne, and despatched one Hecataeus to bring back or assassinate him.<sup>442</sup> Given that compared to Alexander, Attalus had no realistic prospect of gaining the throne, Diodorus was presumably referring to Attalus' chance of ruling as regent for the son he reports Cleopatra having just given birth to.<sup>443</sup> In addition, Diodorus claims that:

“...immediately after the death of Philip, Attalus actually set his hand to revolt and had agreed with the Athenians to undertake joint action against Alexander, but later changed his mind. Preserving the letter that had been brought to him by Demosthenes, he sent it off to

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<sup>440</sup> Green 1991, 90.

<sup>441</sup> See above, chapter II.

<sup>442</sup> Diod. 17.2.3, 2.5.

<sup>443</sup> *ibid.*

Alexander and tried by expressions of loyalty to remove from himself and possible suspicion.”<sup>444</sup>

Such actions not only suggest Attalus genuinely posed a threat to Alexander, but also allow for the existence of a group of supporters at court; he would surely not have revolted unless well supported. However, Diodorus’ account leaves various questions unanswered. Why, despite revolting almost immediately after Philip’s death, did Attalus apparently achieve nothing? Can such a revolt have been so swift, given the timeframe demanded for letters to have been sent between Asia and Athens?<sup>445</sup> Why, if Attalus was such a threat, and was in command of a considerably sized army, did Alexander seemingly send a single man against him, and with orders to attempt to bring him back alive? Most of all, how can Attalus have thought he could change back to supporting Alexander having committed treason?

In his 1981 article *The Assassination of Philip II*, J. R. Ellis conducted a detailed examination of Attalus’ actions following Philip’s death.<sup>446</sup> As has been highlighted above, there are severe problems with the chronology and time frame of the events in question, which Ellis puts down to severe compression of the timescale by Diodorus. Plutarch, who claims that Demosthenes sent letters to “the king’s generals in Asia”, supports the idea of Attalus having received communications from Athens. That Attalus was apparently punished for this is indicated by Justin, who notes that:

“Alexander put to death all his mother-in-law’s relatives whom Philip had advance to positions of dignity or military command.”<sup>447</sup>

Importantly though, Justin says that this occurred “when Alexander set out for Asia;” as he dealt with uprisings in Greece beforehand,<sup>448</sup> this was not until at least late 335. This suggests that despite apparently rebelling upon Philip’s death, Attalus was left

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<sup>444</sup> Diod. 17.5.1.

<sup>445</sup> Given that travel by sea followed a course of hugging the coastline rather than sailing across open sea, for a letter to reach its destination and a reply be received back would have taken several weeks at least.

<sup>446</sup> Ellis 1981, 107-110.

<sup>447</sup> Just. 11.5.1.

<sup>448</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 11.

unpunished for around a year, if not more. This is confirmed by Polyaeus, who mentions that Attalus still held his command in 335.<sup>449</sup>

Given this lengthy gap between rebellion and assassination, Alexander cannot have dispatched Hecataeus early on. This could suggest that Alexander was not ready or able to move against him yet. However, Attalus' inaction following Philip's death suggests that upon becoming king Alexander was not concerned about Attalus' loyalty. In support of this one might ask why, if Attalus was part of a group that was in some way behind Philip's murder, was he, and indeed Parmenio not ready to immediately move back into Macedon, and link up with their allies at court? Even if the faction existed but was not responsible for Philip's murder, surely decisive action of some sort could be expected. That none of this occurred suggests that Attalus was totally unprepared for Philip's death, was completely uninvolved in it, and had not given Alexander any reason to seriously think otherwise, either at the banquet or since.

How then to explain Diodorus' claim of immediate revolt? In the context of the above interpretation of Attalus and Alexander's situation, the former's actions were presumably the following. The general received letters proposing a pact with Athens, but rather than acting swiftly and decisively upon their contents, he hesitated. In this his motivation was not by a wish to rebel against Alexander, but uncertainty over events at Macedon. Given the execution for treason of Amyntas Perdicca and the Lyncestae<sup>450</sup> and the revolts in Greece, he must have felt it prudent not to rush to publicly profess allegiance to a man who could be overthrown. Once Alexander's success in Greece was clear however, Attalus felt he should confirm his loyalty to his king. The letters would make an excellent demonstration of the depth of his feeling; showing as they did how he could have sided with Alexander's enemies, but did not. He delayed too long in sending them however; Alexander had grown suspicious of the silence from Asia, and dispatched Hecataeus, who carried out

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<sup>449</sup> Polyaeus. 5.44.4.

<sup>450</sup> See Section II.

his orders effectively. If one assumes this, it is not unreasonable to suspect that Diodorus assumed Attalus had revolted immediately after Philip's death because of the fate that befell him. In this he was possibly confused by his own compression of the events' timescale.

If Attalus' words did not indicate a political group at court, infidelity on Olympias' part or anything beyond a personal dislike of her origins, what did they mean? One is left with only one conclusion; that Attalus' language was not to be taken literally. Such is the opinion of E. Carney, who argues that:

"A much more viable solution involves the realisation that Attalus' legitimacy language...should be understood in a comparative context. Today if a person labels someone with a common street epithet, that person means to insult the individual at whom the insult is directed but hardly intends to accuse the victim of incest with his mother, even though the insult is meant to slur the mother as well. Attalus...may not have intended his insult to be taken literally."<sup>451</sup>

The idea is ultimately a suggestion, and cannot be proven. However, given the firm lack of support for all other arguments concerning Attalus' language, there is no obvious reason to reject the proposal. Attalus' words were most likely uttered drunkenly and without consideration for their consequences. That they revealed a usually concealed prejudice against the non-Macedonian Olympias and her son is probable. Given the context however, it is unlikely the words meant anything beyond Attalus' personal feeling that the sons of his niece would be 'more' Macedonian and thus 'more' legitimate than Alexander.

One question remains. If Philip was not subject to any pressure from a group at court, why did he actively object to his son's furious arguing with Attalus? If what has already been presented is correct, there were no existing tensions between father and son, the latter had no reason to be uneasy with the latter's marriage. Here it is appropriate to remember the context of the quarrel, the symposium. Not only was it an occasion for eating and drinking, but an arena for conversation and discussion. It has been established that as king Philip was not first among equals, but

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<sup>451</sup> Carney 1992, 176.

very much a monarch.<sup>452</sup> As he was not forced to depend on official bodies or councils for guidance on his actions, or answer to them for their results, the Macedonian symposium to a large extent defined the king's inner circle, and demonstrated who was in favour, trusted and valued, and who was not. It was, as one historian has put it, "the ground on which one's relationship with the king and others was constantly being tested."<sup>453</sup> Such a competitive ethos could well explain Alexander's angry response to Attalus' slur. Whether it was calculatedly or drunkenly uttered, Alexander perhaps felt he had to respond to maintain the respect of his father and those around him who he wished one day to command as king.<sup>454</sup> Such judgement could be called naïve, and rightly. Having spent at least the last three years grooming his Alexander as his heir, Philip was hardly likely to start reconsidering simply because of one courtier's drunken remark, even if that courtier was his new father-in-law. Inexperience at such an occasion could explain Alexander's foolishness, but frustration at his failure to recognise the reality of the situation, and act accordingly, may nevertheless have been behind Philip's criticism of his son.

There is another possibility. The banquet was hosted by Philip, this obliging him to maintain certain standards of respect towards his guest for fear of violating *xenia*.<sup>455</sup> As Philip's son, Alexander would surely have been expected to do the same. Disturbing the occasion with arguments was hardly in keeping with this however, especially when the person Alexander was quarrelling with was the father of the bride. Attalus' remark was hardly appropriate, and Philip may well have not approved. Of his son and father-in-law however, he could reprimand the former. The effect of alcohol no doubt worsened the judgement of all involved, probably worsening any feeling of resentment felt by Alexander.

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<sup>452</sup> Hammond 2004, 12-13.

<sup>453</sup> Borza 1983, 55.

<sup>454</sup> Carney 1992, 176.

<sup>455</sup> *ibid.* 175.



## (vi) Illyria and Epirus

One would not expect relations to be beyond repair following such an incident however. Alexander and Olympias left Pella at some point shortly after the banquet. The emphasis in the sources is very much on their exit being a result of Attalus' and Philip's behaviour:

"After this Olympias fled to the Molossians and Alexander fled to the Illyrians."<sup>456</sup>

"After this drunken brawl, Alexander took Olympias away and settled her in Epirus, while he himself went to live in Illyria."<sup>457</sup>

"That was why Alexander had gone with his mother to his uncle in Epirus, and after than to the kings of Illyria."<sup>458</sup>

Such a view can be observed amongst modern scholars,<sup>459</sup> but whether this is really appropriate is questionable. Although Justin agrees with Athenaeus and Plutarch's version of events, he claims elsewhere that shortly after marrying Cleopatra, Philip had "repudiated" Olympias as he "suspected her of adultery."<sup>460</sup> As has been said, this is to be dismissed as the idea of adultery, or of Olympias being repudiated clearly demonstrates a failure to recognise that the Macedonians practiced polygamy.<sup>461</sup> If this is what Justin sees as behind Alexander and Olympias' departure, then his claim is strongly undermined.

This is not the only problem. Justin also alleges that having reached her home land of Epirus,

"Olympias was also trying to induce her brother Alexander, the king of Epirus, to go to war, and would have succeeded if Philip had not forestalled him by giving him his daughter in marriage."<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> Ath. 13.557e. Other translations offer the similarly strongly worded "went into exile for Olympias' actions."

<sup>457</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9.7.

<sup>458</sup> Just. 9.7.5.

<sup>459</sup> Badian 1963, 244; Hamilton 1973, 40; Ellis 1981, 118; Green 1991, 90f.

<sup>460</sup> Just. 9.5.9, cf. 9.72, 11.11.5. See above, p107.

<sup>461</sup> Ellis 1981, 118; Heckel 1981, 54; Hammond 1994, 172.

<sup>462</sup> Just. 9.7.7.

The idea that the king of Epirus would consider attacking Philip, the man who put him on the throne seems highly unlikely, and one would reject it but for Philip offering his daughter to Alexander. It is this that has led some scholars to follow Justin's version of events.<sup>463</sup> It could be argued that Olympias felt insulted by Philip's actions at Pella, and that the marriage was arranged by Philip to prevent any feeling of obligation on Alexander's part to defend his family's honour in any way.<sup>464</sup> However, this still seems unlikely. Either way, it has been demonstrated above that there is no need to assume that Olympias was so upset by Philip marrying again to attempt such a radical move

A reference by Arrian suggests an alternative motive for Olympias becoming upset:

"Alexander fell under Philip's suspicion when the latter married Eurydice and treated Alexander's mother with dishonour."<sup>465</sup>

This gives two important facts. Firstly, that Cleopatra was apparently renamed 'Eurydice' after marrying Philip, and that Philip offended Olympias at the same time. Although a Roman writer, Arrian cannot have made the same mistake as Justin of assuming the marriage was the cause of offence, as he states in his preface that he used the works of the Macedonians Ptolemy and Aristobulus.<sup>466</sup> As both would have understood, unlike Justin's sources, the concept of polygamy in Macedon, the offence must have been something else. The statement could be taken, like others' references, to refer to Philip's behaviour at the banquet. No mention is made of this however, and Arrian provides a more likely alternative; 'Eurydice' was the name of Philip's mother.<sup>467</sup> As has been discussed, Olympias had most likely enjoyed a greater prominence compared to Philip's other wives for at least the previous three years as a result of being mother to Philip's heir apparent. To grant Cleopatra the name of the most recent queen mother could thus have been taken as a slight by Olympias, even

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<sup>463</sup> Badian 1963, 246; Cawkwell 1978, 179; Fears 1975, 128; Green 1991, 90f; Griffith 1979, 682.

<sup>464</sup> Carney 1992, 178f.

<sup>465</sup> Arr. 3.6.5.

<sup>466</sup> As discussed already, Justin was most likely using the Greek Satyrus, whose ignorance on the subject of polygamy is more than likely. As Macedonians, Ptolemy and Aristobulus would not have made the same mistake.

<sup>467</sup> Just. 7.4.5.

if it was not intended as one.<sup>468</sup> Quite why Philip did it can never be known; perhaps he was deeply enamoured with his young bride and sought to make a grand gesture of love to her. If true however, it would mean that Olympias' departure from Pella would surely have been more of a demonstration of indignation rather than an enraged dash in search of vengeance.<sup>469</sup>

Alexander's going with her to Epirus can be seen as a show of support, but need not be interpreted as anything more serious. There is circumstantial evidence to support Alexander going on to Illyria; as will be seen, the death of the former royal page, Pausanias, came in battle against the Illyrians shortly before Philip's death,<sup>470</sup> and Alexander was also obliged to deal with Illyrian uprisings upon acceding.<sup>471</sup> It would make far more sense for Alexander's accompanying his mother to have been deliberately decided. The idea that Alexander or Olympias would or could just travel to Epirus on a whim and without preparation or protection is hard to believe, as is the notion of Alexander going to the Illyrians without purpose or permission.<sup>472</sup> It is surely far easier to believe that it had already been arranged for Alexander to travel to the Illyrian kingdoms, and he chose to accompany his mother to Epirus as a show of support before doing so.

Why then did the marriage between Cleopatra and Alexander of Epirus occur with such convenient timing? One could see it as a conciliatory gesture; to assuage whatever offence Philip had caused Olympias by giving Cleopatra the name (or title) 'Eurydice.' However, it is more likely that the move was part of an effort by Philip to increase the number of potential male heirs to the Macedonian throne. As has already been discussed, it was very likely that this was behind his own marriage to Cleopatra. In further support for this idea, one can point to the fact that Philip arranged the marriage of his daughter, Cynanne, to Amyntas Perdicca, his nephew, at

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<sup>468</sup> Hammond 1994, 173f.

<sup>469</sup> Carney 1992, 188 sees her absence as "a self-imposed exile."

<sup>470</sup> Develin 1981, 40; Fears 1975, 120-3. See below, section IV.

<sup>471</sup> Arr. 1.1.4-6, 11; Diod. 17.8; Plut. *Alex.* 11.

<sup>472</sup> Hammond 1994, 173.

approximately the same time.<sup>473</sup> Also, as will be seen below, Philip welcomed the offer of a marriage alliance between the daughter of the Carian satrap Pixodarus and his son Arrhidaeus.<sup>474</sup> Given that Philip was planning to depart for Asia, and very possibly take Alexander with him, this is surely a more acceptable reason for the timing of Alexander of Epirus' marriage.

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<sup>473</sup> Arr. *FGrH* n. 156 F9.22' Polyæn. 8.60. See below, section IV.

<sup>474</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 10.1-3. See below, section III.

### III. Persian Satraps and Elder Brothers

It has been seen so far that there would appear to be little reason to assume that the relationship between Philip and Alexander was riven with tension and suspicion, as has been presumed by many in the past. No firm evidence has been presented for the king to have been considering replacing Alexander as his heir-apparent or, more importantly, for Alexander to have seriously suspected his father had such intentions.

One bizarre incident suggests otherwise however. In most likely spring 336, not long after Alexander's return to Pella,

"Pixodarus, the satrap of Caria tried to form a family union with Philip, hoping by this means to insinuate himself into a military alliance. His plan was to offer the hand of his eldest daughter to Philip's son Arrhidaeus, and he sent Aristocritus to Macedonia to try to negotiate the match. Alexander's mother and his friends sent him a distorted account of this manoeuvre, making out that Philip was planning to settle the kingdom upon Arrhidaeus by arranging a brilliant marriage and treating him as a person of great consequence. Alexander was disturbed by these stories and sent Thessalus, the tragic actor, to Caria to tell Pixodarus that he should pay no attention to Arrhidaeus, who was not only an illegitimate son of Philip's but was weak-minded as well: instead, he should offer his daughter's hand to Alexander. Pixodarus was far more pleased with this suggestion than with his original proposal. When Philip discovered this, he went to Alexander's room, taking with him one Philotas the son of Parmenio, one of the prince's companions. There he scolded his son and angrily reproached him for behaving so ignobly and so unworthily of his position as to wish to marry the daughter of a mere Carian, who was no more than the slave of a barbarian king. As for Thessalus, he wrote to the Corinthians ordering them to send him to Macedon in chains, and at the same time he banished four of Alexander's friends, Harpalus, Nearchus, Erygius and Ptolemy. Later Alexander recalled all of these men and raised them to the highest honours."<sup>475</sup>

Plutarch, not the most reliable source, is the only authority to record any aspect of this incident. The only part confirmed elsewhere is the exile of Harpalus, Nearchus, Erygius and Ptolemy, which is put down to Arrian to their staying loyal to Alexander when Philip treated Olympias "with dishonour."<sup>476</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 10.1-3.

<sup>476</sup> Arr. 3.6.4-7.

J. R. Ellis has dismissed the episode as a fiction, saying that

“[whilst] there is nothing intrinsically improbable in the main substance of the Pixodarus affair...what we are given combines the fundamentally explicable and plausible with a notion that...is late and false and then provides it with a list of characters neatly cast but playing dramatic roles devoid of any discernable link with whatever else is known of them.”<sup>477</sup>

Hammond has similarly rejected the story, feeling that “its unabbreviated form was probably totally imaginary and Alexander’s part in it seems to bear the mark of malicious fiction.”<sup>478</sup> However, both Carney and R. Develin have made the point that “It is too odd a tale to invent and no plausible reason for inventing it occurs.”<sup>479</sup> As Ellis acknowledges, the fundamental idea has considerable merit; Philip’s advance force had most likely reached Asia by this time, and that a Carian satrap should seek an alliance under such circumstances is unsurprising.<sup>480</sup> His being answerable to the Persian king does not prevent this being the case.<sup>481</sup> Perhaps the most important point, one which goes curiously unconsidered by many modern scholars, is that Plutarch was writing a biography of Alexander. Thus such an event, though largely unimportant even in his short life, warranted inclusion in Plutarch’s work. Given such relative insignificance, it would hardly be surprising however if those writers whose focus was Philip did not feel compelled to bother including it in their’s. In such circumstances Plutarch’s being the only source is not reason enough to dismiss the anecdote.

That Alexander could have been persuaded that Philip was “planning to settle the kingdom on Arrhidaeus however seems hard to believe.”<sup>482</sup> Carney has attempted to point to the potentially important role Pixodarus could play in the invasion of Asia as evidence for the seriousness of Philip’s intentions.<sup>483</sup> However, this is

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<sup>477</sup> Ellis 1981, 135-6.

<sup>478</sup> Hammond 1994, 173-4. Cf 1980b, 168.

<sup>479</sup> Carney 1992, 179f; Develin 1981, 94-5. Cf. Badian 1963, 245.

<sup>480</sup> Ellis 1981, 136. On the timing, see Heckel 1981, 55; amongst others.

<sup>481</sup> Hammond 1994, 174.

<sup>482</sup> Griffith 1979, 681.

<sup>483</sup> Carney 1992, 180.

unconvincing. The arrangement was not in any way a “brilliant marriage,” and Arrhidaeus had received no treatment until now to suggest he was, in Philip’s opinion, “a person of great consequence.” If this were the case, why would Alexander have reacted as he did? Carney has suggested that Philip deliberately chose Arrhidaeus to marry Pixodarus’ daughter as a reminder to Alexander that the latter’s display of support for Olympias was an act of insubordination that should not be repeated. Alexander’s offer to the Carian was thus intended as a response to his father in kind.<sup>484</sup> Fredricksmeyer has similarly argued that the competitive atmosphere that existed between father and son predisposed Alexander to challenge his father’s intentions.<sup>485</sup> However, there is little evidence to suggest that Alexander should have felt so compelled to resort to such a move that, if nothing else, would demonstrate a remarkable lack of long term consideration for his future.

More attractive is the idea that Pixodarus had no preference which of Philip’s sons was married to his daughter. Indeed one could suspect that he may have had no idea how many sons Philip had, and offered his daughter without any specification to ensure the alliance with which he was concerned. In support of this one can point to Alexander’s instruction of Thessalus to inform Pixodarus of Arrhidaeus’ mental deficiencies. This would suggest that Pixodarus was unaware of this, and therefore presumably knew little or nothing of Philip’s sons.<sup>486</sup> As Philip took multiple wives, it is even possible that the Carian initially offered his daughter to the king himself. In such circumstances Philip may well have chosen Arrhidaeus for the union as it was not, as has been said, a hugely significant arrangement. Philip’s upbraiding of Alexander suggests he had loftier aims for his son.

Although Philip would probably have been frustrated by Alexander acting contrary to these intentions, any anger he would have felt would surely have been caused by the political implications of Alexander’s behaviour. The prince’s message to

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<sup>484</sup> Carney 1992, 180.

<sup>485</sup> Fredricksmeyer 1990, 303.

<sup>486</sup> Although in Alexander’s mind this presumably made him a better candidate for the marriage, if Pixodarus was concerned primarily with an alliance with Philip, whether he actually cared at all is another matter.

Pixodarus would have created confusion and undermined Philip's authority, and the sincerity of his proposed arrangements with the Carian.

The question that remains is of course why Alexander should have offered himself to Pixodarus if he was far from unsure of his position. In answer to this it is possible that given his position, he felt he was being overlooked. It is surely feasible that the still young Alexander failed to recognise the relative insignificance of a marriage to the daughter of Pixodarus, and felt he, as heir-apparent, should be the one involved in the union. This interpretation runs counter to Plutarch's version of events, but this is not a version to be taken literally. The timeframe has clearly been heavily compressed – it is unclear exactly how long after the banquet affair and Alexander's journey to the Illyrians the matter occurred, and particularly, when in relation to Olympias' return to Macedon<sup>487</sup> – and various aspects of the affair are obviously imagined. There is no way, for example, that Plutarch could have known what Philip shouted at Alexander when the king went to his son's room.

This is of course speculation to a great degree, but it must be said that such an interpretation is perfectly feasible. Alternative views demand Alexander to have feared for his position as Philip's heir and for serious tension to have existed between the two prior to the event. Such a version of events seemingly originates, as has been discussed, from the account of the marriage banquet taken from Satyrus. It would seem clear from the common elements – Philip being furious with his son, Alexander fearful for his position, conversations related verbatim – that Plutarch is continuing to use Satyrus as his source for the Pixodarus affair.<sup>488</sup> At the very least his narration of the matter is written with Satyrus' viewpoint firmly in mind. Given how much of Satyrus' account should be seriously questioned, one should be suspicious of Plutarch's presentation of the Pixodarus affair, though the occurrence of the events themselves should most likely be accepted.

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<sup>487</sup> Carney 1992, 178.

<sup>488</sup> Hammond 1994, 174-5.



#### IV. Lyncestae & Amyntae

##### (i) Introduction

Shortly after Philip's assassination, Heromenes and Arrhabaeus, two brothers from the northern Macedonian kingdom of Lyncestis were executed on the charge of being part of a conspiracy that was behind the murder.<sup>489</sup> A third brother, Alexander, apparently avoided the same fate because, according to Arrian:

“...after Philip's death he was among the first of [Alexander's] friends to come to him, and, helping him on with his breastplate, accompanied him to the palace.”<sup>490</sup>

Justin and Curtius also relate how Lyncestian Alexander was pardoned, though both attribute it to his being “the first to salute” his namesake as king.<sup>491</sup> Although he survived this time, Alexander was arrested at some point in 334 or 333 when a letter was intercepted from the Persian king Darius, offering him 1,000 talents and aid in securing the Macedonian throne in exchange for murdering Alexander.<sup>492</sup> He was eventually executed in 330 in the aftermath of the treason of Philotas, son of Alexander's general Parmenio.<sup>493</sup> Also put to death on the charge of treason in 336 was Amyntas Perdicca, son of Perdiccas III and Alexander's uncle, for whom Philip may have initially been regent at the start of his reign.<sup>494</sup> Several others are recorded as having fled to the court of Darius around the same time.

The matter of the Lyncestians has provoked different responses from modern scholars. Badian saw the brothers firmly as scapegoats for Olympias and Alexander, and were “taken entirely by surprise by the course of events.”<sup>495</sup> More recently Ellis has suggested that the brothers were very possibly guilty of treasonous behaviour of

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<sup>489</sup> Diod. 17.2.1.

<sup>490</sup> Arr. 1.25.1.

<sup>491</sup> Curt. 7.1.6-7; Just. 11.2.1-2.

<sup>492</sup> Arr. 1.25.1-10.

<sup>493</sup> Curt. 7.1.9; Diod. 17.80.2; Just. 12.14.1.

<sup>494</sup> On the question of Philip's regency, see Tronson 1984, 116-56.

<sup>495</sup> Badian 1963, 245.

some kind.<sup>496</sup> Bosworth has agreed that Lyncestian agitation was likely, though his suggestion that Philip 'rejecting' the Orestian Olympias in favour of the southern Macedonian Cleopatra inspired outrage in the northern Macedonian kingdoms seems unlikely.<sup>497</sup>

Such variation in opinion is largely due to the issue of the Lyncestae comprising not one, but two questions. Firstly, whether or not some, any or all of those who fled or were executed were guilty of treason. Secondly, if so, were they therefore involved in Pausanias' murder of Philip. It is important to recognise this distinction, and it is both these questions that will be addressed in this section.

## (ii) Revolt?

The first issues that should be addressed are the potential reasons for, and possibility of any intended revolt being the motivation behind Philip's murder. Lyncestis was the most northerly of all the kingdoms, the others being Elimiotis, Orestis and Tymphaea, that comprised Upper Macedonia. This bloc formed the barrier between the southern Macedonian heartland, and the Illyrian tribes to the north and Molossian confederacy to the west.<sup>498</sup> It had seemingly enjoyed a lengthy period of independence prior to its annexation by Philip (the exact date of which is unknown), and the few surviving references prior to this suggest that it had not enjoyed the best relations with Lower Macedonia. Lyncestis' earliest appearance in the sources has it in direct conflict with Macedon, with Perdiccas II using the assistance of the Spartan general Brasidas to prevent the Lyncestian king Arrhabaeus gaining independence in 424.<sup>499</sup> Aristotle indicates that Archelaus was also at war with Lyncestis at some point during his reign (413-399).

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<sup>496</sup> Ellis 1981, 125-9; 1971, 15-24.

<sup>497</sup> Bosworth 1971, 93-105.

<sup>498</sup> See Hammond 1967, maps 14 and 15.

<sup>499</sup> Thuc. 4.79.2, 83, 124-6.

It would apparently not have been unparalleled then if the Lyncestian brothers had wished to attempt to re-establish their relatively recently lost independence. Plutarch remarks that following Philip's murder, "all Macedon was festering with revolt."<sup>500</sup> As Alexander was the focus of Plutarch's work, the claim is almost certainly an exaggeration, intended to emphasise the challenges overcome by the young prince. Despite this however, there may well have been some basis to the claim.

Several modern scholars have argued that rather than just independence, the Lyncestae in fact sought to overthrow Philip and seize control of his kingdom.<sup>501</sup> Such a theory relies heavily on Curtius, Diodorus and Justin's references to Alexander as "the Lyncestian" indicating his being of the Lyncestian royal house.<sup>502</sup> This is never stated in the sources however, and Bosworth has argued that "...the use of the distinguishing epithet could be only to differentiate him from his royal namesake."<sup>503</sup> Arrian's referring to Alexander as only "of Lyncestis" could be seen to support this.<sup>504</sup> Unfortunately though, neither argument can be comprehensively proven or dismissed. Certainly the brothers were aristocrats, as is shown by Alexander being well known enough by his royal namesake to rush straight to him in support. However, the evidence regarding their exact social position is insufficient to say anything other than that it is possible that they were Lyncestian royalty.

Even if one assumes the Lyncestae were of royal stock, this does not make a particularly strong case for the likelihood of their attempting to usurp Philip. With the brief exception of Ptolemy the Alorite (368-5), Macedon had been ruled exclusively by the Argead dynasty since the fifth century. As Bosworth has put it,

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<sup>500</sup> Plut. *De. Alex. Fort. Aut.* 327C.

<sup>501</sup> Badian 1960, 325 and Fears 1975, 130 n. 63 infer the idea, whilst Welles, 1963, 121 n. 3, 207, n. 2, 350 n.1 states it. See also Carney 1980, 24.

<sup>502</sup> Curt. 7.1.5; Diod. 17.32.1; Just. 11.7.1.

<sup>503</sup> Bosworth 1971, 96 n. 5.

<sup>504</sup> Arr. 1.25.1.

“...it seems highly implausible that dynasts from the small mountain state of Lyncestis could have gained preference over the surviving male Argeads, or even the most senior echelons of the Macedonian nobility.”<sup>505</sup>

An alternative possibility exists however, which requires the examination of two other men. Firstly, Amyntas Perdicca. Although a theoretical risk to Philip throughout his reign, the son of Perdiccas III was apparently allowed to live at court without issue. Indeed, late in his reign, Philip arranged his nephew’s marriage to Cynanne, daughter of his own union with the Illyrian Audata.<sup>506</sup> Amyntas was executed with Heromenes and Arrhabaeus however, on a charge of treason. Secondly, Amyntas Antiochou, who served initially as a general under Alexander very early in the latter’s reign, but who fled to Asia, according to Arrian,

“...not because he had received any injury from the king, but from ill-will towards him, and thinking in not unlikely that he should suffer some ill treatment from him on account of his disloyalty.”<sup>507</sup>

A fragmentary inscription from the city of Lebedaea records a list of 26 people who consulted the oracle of Trophonios.<sup>508</sup> One section is of particular interest, but understanding it is difficult due to the quality of the recording. Only two copies of the inscription survive – one from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century and the other the early 18<sup>th</sup> – and the original stonework has seemingly been lost.<sup>509</sup> The differing versions present the relevant section thus:

Pococke (1752): [– –] INT [–] ΓΚΗΔΙΚΑΣ [–] ΕΔΟΝΟΝΒ . ΙΤΑ .

Leake (1835): [–] ΥΝΤΑ [–] ΠΠΚΑΙ [–] ΚΕΔΟΝΩΝΒΑΣΙΛΕΥ [–]

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<sup>505</sup> Bosworth 1971, 96. Carney 1980, 25 makes the same point, though less firmly.

<sup>506</sup> Arr. *FGrH* n. 156, F9.22; Polyæn. 8.60. The union is dated to late in Philip’s reign by Polyænus’ stating that Amyntas was executed soon after, an act which occurred early in Alexander’s reign. See Carney 2000, 278 n. 79. For a discussion on the various versions of her name, see Heckel 1983-4, 193-200.

<sup>507</sup> Arr. 1.17.9. Cf. Curt. 3.11.18, 4.1.27; Diod. 17.48.2, Plut. *Al.* 20.

<sup>508</sup> *IG* vii 3055.

<sup>509</sup> The earlier recording is found in R. Pococke, *Inscriptiones Antiquae* P. I c. 5 s. 5 p. 61 (1752) and the latter in W. M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece* ii. 129, 132 and pl. vii n. 32. In addition, both are presented in *IG* vii 3055 and in H. Collitz 1884, i. 156-9.

The first attempted reconstruction of this offered [Ἀμ]ύντας [Ἀριδη...ω Μα]κεδόνων βασιλεύ[ς],<sup>510</sup> which refers to an Amyntas as ‘king of the Macedonians’. This is frustratingly vague, as theoretically three kings – Amyntas II (393/2), III (393/2-370/69), IV (Amyntas Perdicca, 359-6 ?) – ruled Macedon in the fourth century, when the inscription was most likely carved.<sup>511</sup> However, a subsequent attempt at restoration offered instead [Ἀμ]ύντας Π[ερ]δε[κ]κα [Μα]κεδόνων βασιλεύ[ς],<sup>512</sup> an interpretation that appears to make better use of the available letters.<sup>513</sup> The inclusion of the patronymic ‘Perdicca’ is crucial as it rules out Amyntas II and III as the former was the son of an Archelaus and the latter of an Arrhidaeus, not a Perdiccas. This leaves Amyntas Perdicca. That he is thus almost certainly the man mentioned in the Lebedaeian inscription is confirmed by the existence of a second engraving, this time from Oropus, which records a grant of proxeny to ‘Amyntas Perdicca the Macedonian’ ( Ἀμύντας Περδίκκα Μακεδόνων) by the Oropian Assembly.<sup>514</sup> This has been dated to the mid-fourth century. Given this, it is very hard to believe that two different men with the same name and patronymic, both from Macedon and both significant enough figures to inspire inscriptions recording their visits could both have been in Boeotia at the same time.<sup>515</sup>

If one assumes then that it was Alexander’s uncle referred to at Lebedaea and Oropus, an issue arises. Although it is not certain that Amyntas actually enjoyed any time as king with Philip as his regent before the latter usurped permanent control of the throne his doing so is the only time he could have legitimately used the title ‘King of the Macedonians’. Although his exact age upon the death of his father, Perdiccas III, in 359, is unknown, it seems certain that he was only a child. Perdiccas was presumably a minor in 369/8, as Ptolemy Alorites began ruling as regent for him in that year.<sup>516</sup> Assuming Perdiccas would have been seen to come of age at around 20, he would presumably have been at most 23 when he eventually became king some

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<sup>510</sup> R. Meister in H. Collitz, 1884, i. 156-9.

<sup>511</sup> Amyntas I (c. 547-498) is too early to be considered.

<sup>512</sup> U. Köhler, *Hermes* 24 (1889), 640-3.

<sup>513</sup> Ellis 1971, 17.

<sup>514</sup> *IG* vii 4251.

<sup>515</sup> Ellis 1971, 17f.

<sup>516</sup> Aesch. 2.28f.

time in 366/5. There is no sign that he was married prior to assuming the throne, so even if a union was affected immediately, the resultant child Amyntas could not have been more than eight upon his father's death.<sup>517</sup> In such circumstances the boy would surely not have been travelling through Greece, and so the question arises of when he did so. More significantly, it must be asked why he would have been claiming to be the 'King of the Macedonians', as whenever it occurred it would have been treasonous.

A clue can be found at Oropus. An inscription similar to that referring to Amyntas Perdicca details an identical grant of proxeny at the same time to one 'Amyntas Antiochou the Macedonian'.<sup>518</sup> It would thus seem that both men were in Greece at the same time, and apparently receiving welcome in the same places. Given that Antiochou fled Macedon for fear of Alexander, the assumption would surely be that this was the treason for he fled and Perdicca was executed.<sup>519</sup> Support can be found for such a theory.

Firstly, there is the matter of one Aristomedes of Pherae. Like Amyntas Antiochou, he is recorded as fleeing the Macedonian court soon after Philip's death.<sup>520</sup> Alone this would not necessarily connect him with the Amyntae; various others surely abandoned the court at that time. However, a third inscription from Oropus,<sup>521</sup> although apparently connected to a votive offering rather than an oracle consultation,<sup>522</sup> indicates Aristomedes' presence at Oropus at the same time as the two Amyntae:

[Ἄρισ]τομ[ήδ]ης Με [—] [Φ]εραῖος Ἀμφια[ράωι]

[Aris]tom[ed]es Me ... [Ph]eraios Amphia[raoi]

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<sup>517</sup> Ellis 1971, 18.

<sup>518</sup> *IG* vii 4250.

<sup>519</sup> Ellis 1971, 19-20.

<sup>520</sup> Arr. 2.13.2.

<sup>521</sup> See B. Ch. Petrakos 1966, 45-7.

<sup>522</sup> *ibid.*

That a man who fled from Alexander was also present at Oropus at the same time as one who did the same and one who was executed for treason is surely no coincidence.

Secondly, and most significantly, there is the fact that Amyntas Perdicca was the uncle of Alexander.<sup>523</sup> Whether Philip began ruling as king directly after Perdiccas III's death in 359 or following a period as regent for Amyntas, the fact remains that as Perdiccas' son, Amyntas had a strong claim to the throne. Indeed, he had a right to feel aggrieved at his situation, as if he had initially been king, Philip had essentially deposed him. In such circumstances one could suppose firstly that Amyntas might have been drawn to the possibility of ruling Macedon, and secondly that as a result he could have been the figurehead of a movement to prevent Alexander from doing so.<sup>524</sup> In essence, though it seems highly unlikely that the Lyncestian brothers would have sought to overthrow Philip and replace him themselves, Amyntas' involvement would offer a chance to install a man who could consequently grant Lyncestis independence and be an acceptable successor to Philip.<sup>525</sup>

Although the suggested dates for the inscriptions of the middle or third quarter of the fourth century allow for this theory, they also permit the conspiracy to have occurred at the start of Philip's reign, when the attempts of Pausanias and Argeus took place. However, even without including the already-considered issue of Amyntas Perdiccas' youth, there are several reasons why this latter possibility is unlikely. Firstly, it would be strange for such a conspiracy to go completely unmentioned by the sources, especially as the attempts of others receive considerable attention.<sup>526</sup> Also, as the execution of one of his half-brothers and pursuit of two others to Olynthus shows,<sup>527</sup> Philip was apparently not prepared to tolerate even the possibility of conspiracies against him forming around potential

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<sup>523</sup> Curt. 6.9.17.

<sup>524</sup> Ellis 1971, 19.

<sup>525</sup> Carney 1980, 29.

<sup>526</sup> Ellis 1971, 20.

<sup>527</sup> Just. 8.3.10, cf. 7.4.5.

alternative rulers. As has been seen however, Amyntas was apparently at court throughout his reign, and married one of his daughters. More than anything however, it stretches credibility for the conspirators to have attempted to ferment an uprising or around 359, to have failed, yet to have remained at court for the entirety of Philip's reign only to flee or be executed at the start of Alexander's on suspicion of posing a threat to the new king.

One is left with a discrepancy in the timing of the Lyncestian and Amyntae's treason as Justin states that:

"[Alexander's] primary concern was for his father's funeral, at which his first instruction was that all involved in the assassination be put to death at the tomb of his father."<sup>528</sup>

This must be incorrect however, as the inscriptions at Lebedaea and Oropus indicate that the Amyntae's activities must have taken place following Philip's death.

It would seem then that around the time of Philip's death, two men by the name of Amyntas travelled through parts of Boeotia. One of them, Amyntas Perdicca, the son of Philip's predecessor and brother, Perdiccas III, is recorded as using the title 'King of the Macedonians' whilst in Greece. This suggests both men were attempting to inspire support to place Perdicca on the throne in place of Philip's son and obvious successor Alexander. This endeavour was clearly unsuccessful, as soon after Perdicca is recorded as being executed, and his companion, Amyntas Antiochou, as having fled to Asia. In this Antiochou was joined by one Aristomedes of Pherae, most likely a third companion in the conspiracy. Assuming all this, one must return to the Lyncestian brothers, because although it would seem fair to assume that collusion in the activities of the Amyntae caused their execution, there is still one matter to be addressed: the fate of the third brother, Alexander.

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<sup>528</sup> Just. 11.2.1.



### (iii) Alexander the Lyncestian

As has been mentioned, Alexander reportedly survived where his brothers did not by being the first to support his namesake immediately after Philip's death. Curtius also adds that:

"moreover, the pleas of Lyncestes' father-in-law, Antipater, also reduced the king's warranted anger."<sup>529</sup>

Arrian, Curtius and Justin all state that Alexander was pardoned though guilty by the new king. However, events thereafter clash with this interpretation. According to Arrian,

"The king afterwards showed him honour at his court, sent him as general into Thrace; and when Calas, the commander of the Thessalian horse was sent away to a viceroyalty, he was appointed to that general's command."<sup>530</sup>

In addition to this there is the nature of Lyncestian Alexander's eventual loss of command and arrest, about which the sources disagree, and his execution. Arrian alleges that:

"When Amyntas [Antiochou] deserted to Darius, he conveyed to him certain messages and a letter from this Alexander. Darius then sent Sisines, one of his own faithful Persian courtiers, down to the sea-coast, under pretence of going to Atizyes, viceroy of Phrygia, but really to communicate with this Alexander, and to give him pledges, that if he would kill king Alexander, Darius would appoint him king of Macedonia, and would give him 1,000 talents of gold in addition to the kingdom. But Sisines, being captured by Parmenio, told him the real object of his mission. Parmenio sent him immediately under guard to the king, who obtained the same intelligence from him."<sup>531</sup>

Arrian claims that Alexander was consequently arrested and imprisoned during the winter of 334/3, a statement that Justin supports.<sup>532</sup> Diodorus however places the arrest in the autumn of the following year, shortly before the Battle of Issus, and also claims that it resulted from a warning to Alexander from his mother to beware his Lyncestian namesake. Nowhere is a letter from Darius mentioned.<sup>533</sup> Further to this,

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<sup>529</sup> Curt. 7.1.7.

<sup>530</sup> Arr. 1.25.2.

<sup>531</sup> Arr. 1.25.3-10.

<sup>532</sup> Just. 11.7.1-2.

<sup>533</sup> Diod. 17.32.1-2.

Curtius states that Alexander was not executed upon being arrested, but imprisoned for three years before finally being put to death following the execution of Philotas.<sup>534</sup> As Philotas' death occurred in autumn 330, Diodorus' arrest date would appear to be correct. To explain the difference in timing, Carney has suggested that winter 334/3 saw Alexander relieved of his command, but he was not arrested until 333.<sup>535</sup> This could be seen to explain Olympias' letter to her son, as without prior suspicions, there is no reason for her to have suspected Alexander at specifically this time. Diodorus' claim that "there were many other plausible circumstances joining to support the charge, so the Lyncestian was arrested" would seem to refer to an earlier occurrence such as Alexander being removed from his command.

Whatever the precise nature or timing of Alexander's eventual fall, it cannot be ignored that despite being suspected of treason, he was promoted and held in high esteem following his being pardoned. If the new king suspected his namesake of wishing to overthrow him, it is surely not plausible that he would have allowed this. Carney has attempted to point to "the extreme caution and secrecy with which the king and his friends proceeded" following Parmenio's interception of Diodorus' letter as indicating "fear of the Lyncestian's ability to cause a revolt" back in Europe.<sup>536</sup> However, that Alexander was cowed into promoting the Lyncestian until this point simply does not work. If Lyncestian Alexander held so much potential influence, why did he make no use of it? Also, if the king was afraid his namesake's death would provoke an uprising, why was he not similarly apprehensive in 330? And if the Lyncestian's death might have inspired rebellion, why not his arrest? In addition, the caution that apparently marked proceedings could be a result of increased caution in the wake of Philotas' execution. Given this, it must be considered that Alexander genuinely did not suspect his namesake of treason at the start of his reign.

Such a position is more sensible than one might initially expect. The accusations in the sources of Lyncestian Alexander's guilt all come in the context of

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<sup>534</sup> Curt. 7.1.6-7. Just 12.14.1 mentions that Alexander was executed, but gives no date.

<sup>535</sup> Carney 1980, 30-31.

<sup>536</sup> Carney 1980, 31. See Arr. 1.25.3-10.

his being relieved of his command and/or arrested following the interception of Darius' letter. The sources could well have assumed his involvement in 336 based on this event, especially given the fate of his brothers. Arrian claims that Amyntas Antiochou took a letter to Darius from Alexander. However, given how long it took for Darius' offer to be sent (Antiochus fled in 336; Darius' letter was intercepted in late 334), it could well be that it was not a reply at all; as he presumed Alexander to be guilty, Arrian just supposed it was. This would also work with the idea discussed above of the Lyncestian's fall and eventual arrest occurring gradually; if Darius' letter represented confirmation of strong existing suspicions, it is surely more likely that Alexander would have immediately arrested and most likely executed his namesake. If these were new revelations however, Alexander would presumably have sought to investigate carefully the potential guilt of a man who until then he had trusted as a friend.

Why then would Darius have written to Alexander at all? The impetus to do so would surely have come from Amyntas Antiochou, even if he had not brought a letter from Alexander with him. One is unfortunately reduced to conjecture, but it is possible that Alexander was originally involved in some way with the conspiracy of his brothers, the Amyntae and Aristomedes of Pherae. For whatever reason however – perhaps feelings of loyalty to one who was his friend – he disassociated himself from this early on. How advanced the group's plans were is largely dependent on whether or not it was behind Philip's death. Assuming he knew something of their intentions, it is not impossible that even though innocent, Alexander made such a prominent display of loyalty in part to distance himself from anything that he knew or suspected might follow Philip's death. Despite this, presumably due to his increasing concern at Alexander's success in Asia, Darius felt it worth approaching the Lyncestian in an attempt to halt the Macedonian invasion of his empire.

#### (iv) Murderers?

Assuming then that the Amyntas Perdiccas, Amyntas Antiochou, Heromenes, Arrhabaeus, Aristomedes and at some stage perhaps Lyncestian Alexander were involved in a plot to replace Alexander, son of Philip, does it automatically follow that they were behind Philip's murder?<sup>537</sup> If one follows the above interpretation of events – that the treason for which the Lyncestae and Amyntas Perdicca were executed referred to attempts to replace Alexander with Amyntas – then there is no explicit link between it and the murder. Rather, the actions of the Amyntae suggest a rushed and rather naïve attempt to take advantage of an unexpected development. The group were clearly unhappy with Lyncestis' political situation under Philip, but there is nothing to indicate that their actions following his death had been carefully calculated to take maximum advantage of his expected demise.

Regarding Lyncestian Alexander, the situation is difficult to clarify. Modern scholarship has almost exclusively assumed that the guilt or innocence of Heromenes, Arrhabaeus and Alexander must be decided together. However, the significance of Alexander not only acquitting his namesake of any charges of treason, but also promoting him thereafter cannot be underestimated. Although the idea of the Lyncestian being innocent in 336 does not allow the strongest explanation of Darius' letter in 334, it is surely preferable to the idea that Alexander was pressured into forgiving and advancing his namesake by fear of Lyncestian rebellion. Similarly, the extended nature of the Lyncestian's fall suggests the circumstances that brought it about were revelatory, not confirmation of existing suspicions. Altogether, it must be assumed that though guilty of treason, Heromenes, Arrhabaeus, Aristomedes and the Amyntae were not behind the murder of Philip.

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<sup>537</sup> Hammond 1980b, 171-2. argues that the executions of Amyntas Perdicca and the Lyncestian brothers were the result of unrelated conspiracies, which seemingly ignores the involvement of Amyntas Antiochou and the later contact between Lyncestian Alexander and Darius, which surely came at Antiochou's instigation.

## V. Pausanias

### (i) An Assassin's Motives

It may seem strange to discuss the motives of Philip's assassin after those of all the figures who were only connected with the murder after it had taken place. However, Pausanias' motives are recorded in detail and appear, by comparison to those already discussed, relatively simple. Pausanias, an Orestian bodyguard of Philip was at one time "beloved of the king because of his beauty." However, he was at some point reportedly supplanted in the king's affections by another youth, also named Pausanias. Insanely jealous, the Orestian Pausanias began bullying his namesake, "address[ing] him with abusive language, accusing him of being a hermaphrodite and prompt to accept the amorous advances of any who wished." Eventually driven to despair, the other Pausanias informed Attalus, apparently a close friend, of what had been occurring. Almost immediately afterwards he set out as part of Philip's expedition against the Illyrians under one Pleurias. During the battle he "stepped in front of [Philip] and, receiving on his body all the blows directed at the king, so met his death."<sup>538</sup>

Angered by his friend's treatment and effective suicide, Attalus invited the Orestian Pausanias to dinner one night, got him heavily drunk and "handed his unconscious body over to he muleteers to abuse in drunken licentiousness."<sup>539</sup> Diodorus at least offers this version; according to Justin Attalus had previously abused Pausanias sexually when the latter was "in the early years of puberty." Worse still, at the dinner Attalus "subjected [Pausanias] not only to his own carnal desires but, like a prostitute, to those of his fellow diners as well, so making the boy an object of ridicule amongst his peers."<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>538</sup> Diod. 16.93.3-7.

<sup>539</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>540</sup> Just. 9.6.5-6.

Unable to take revenge on Attalus personally due to his position at court, Pausanias appealed to Philip to punish him. Although the king “shared his anger at the barbarity of the act,” Philip did not punish Attalus due to their relationship, and because the latter’s services “were needed urgently.”<sup>541</sup> Instead, he attempted to appease Pausanias with presents and promotion. Unsatisfied and angered however, Pausanias murdered Philip at Aegae as the king entered a theatre that formed part of a procession celebrating a festival and Alexander of Orestis’ marriage to Philip and Olympias’ daughter Cleopatra. Having stabbed Philip, Pausanias fled from the theatre to where his horses were waiting “at the edge of the city,” but caught his foot in a vine, fell and was captured by the pursuing bodyguards, who killed him immediately.<sup>542</sup>

Most of this would seem to be fairly believable. As has already been discussed,<sup>543</sup> Diodorus’ source here was most likely Diyllus, a largely reliable source, especially on matters of Macedonian court life and relationships between men connected with the School of Pages, from which Pausanias undoubtedly came.<sup>544</sup> W. Heckel has stated that “the preamble about the two Pausaniases has a suspicious duplicity,”<sup>545</sup> but there is no reason to suspect the presence of two men named Pausanias as indicating a confusion of events by Diodorus. It could perfectly well be just a coincidence.

The campaign and battle against the Illyrians in which the second Pausanias reportedly “met his death” is not mentioned elsewhere. This has led some scholars<sup>546</sup> to suspect that the ‘Pleurias’ mentioned was a misspelling by Diodorus of ‘Pleuratus,’ an Illyrian leader against whom Philip fought in 345.<sup>547</sup> However, if Pausanias’ abuse occurred shortly before this, it would mean that he would have waited nine years

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<sup>541</sup> Diod. 16.93.8-9.

<sup>542</sup> Diod. 16.93.1-2, 94.3-4.

<sup>543</sup> See above, chapter II.

<sup>544</sup> Diod. 16.91-4. See Hammond 1937, 84, 89f and 1991, 407-13; also Bosworth 1971, 93f and 1988, 22f.

<sup>545</sup> Heckel 1981, 56.

<sup>546</sup> Badian 1963, 247; Hamilton 1965, 121.

<sup>547</sup> Didy. *In Dem.* 12 refers to Philip’s wounding in the thigh, a wound with Isoc. *Epist.* 2.1-12 identifies with the campaign against Pleuratus. Just. 8.6.3 also has Philip fighting the Illyrians at some point between 346 and 343. Cf. Develin 1981, 88; Ellis 1981, 134; Fears 1975, 120-4; Green 1991, 106; Heckel 1981, 56.

before acting on his grievances.<sup>548</sup> It is hard to believe that he would have done nothing for so long, yet have “nursed his wrath implacably” the whole time.<sup>549</sup> In fact, Plutarch and Diodorus clearly place the abuse of Pausanias after the wedding of 337.<sup>550</sup> Whilst there is no reason to assume Cleopatra played any part in the events of Philip’s death, the point remains as an indication of the timing.

E. Badian and P. Green have raised the point that Pausanias cannot have been acting on his own impulse as his grievance was against Attalus, but he murdered Philip as revenge for his humiliation.<sup>551</sup> He must therefore have been persuaded by another party to direct his anger against Philip, whom the other wished dead for their own reasons. However, when considering this, one should bear in mind the opinion of the one surviving contemporary source, Aristotle. In his *Politics*, Alexander’s former tutor wrote that attacks on monarchs resulting from their previous outrageous treatment of or behaviour towards their attackers were always made for reasons of personal revenge, not ambition.<sup>552</sup> As examples he gives Harmodius’ attack on the Peisistratids for their treatment of his sister, and “the attack on Philip by Pausanias because Philip allowed him to be outrageously treated by Attalus and his company.” This is of great significance. It would suggest that having experienced the events and their aftermath, Aristotle accepted Pausanias’ motives, when they came to light, as sufficient explanation for his actions, and presumably suspected no other involvement in the matter.<sup>553</sup>

Aristotle could be suspected of adapting aspects of his account to suit Alexander, as the *Politics* was most likely produced during the latter’s reign. However, if Aristotle felt using a falsified example of Pausanias would have compromised the accuracy, and thus the reliability of his writing, he would surely not

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<sup>548</sup> Griffith 1979, 684.

<sup>549</sup> Diod. 16.94.1.

<sup>550</sup> Diod. 16.93.8; Plut. *Alex.* 10.4.

<sup>551</sup> Badian 1963, 247; Green 1991, 107.

<sup>552</sup> *Aris. Pol.* 1311b 2-4.

<sup>553</sup> Hammond 1994, 175.

have included it.<sup>554</sup> Although Philip's murder was recent, other examples could no doubt have been found. That Philip's death was included therefore surely means that Aristotle was not subject to any pressure to edit his work in favour of Alexander.

Support can be found for Aristotle's assumption. That Pausanias would have become embittered by Philip's failure to punish Attalus is understandable. However, Attalus being made one of the co-commanders of the advance party sent to Asia could well have worsened the situation.<sup>555</sup> To Pausanias it could well have seemed that Philip was not only failing to condemn Attalus, but was actively promoting him.<sup>556</sup> In such a situation Philip's attempts to mollify Pausanias would only have angered the Orestian further.

As has been outlined, the actual murder occurred, according to Diodorus, during the celebrations of a festival and the marriage of Cleopatra and Alexander of Epirus at Aegae.<sup>557</sup> A state banquet and night of drinking were due to be followed by games the next day.

"Every seat in the theatre was taken when Philip appeared wearing a white cloak, and by express orders his bodyguard held away from him and followed only at a distance, since he wanted to show publicly that he was protected by the goodwill of all the Greeks, and had to need of a guard of spearmen. Such was the pinnacle of success that he had attained, but as the praises and congratulations of all rang in his ear, suddenly without warning the plot against the king was revealed as death struck."<sup>558</sup>

The entire procession into the theatre would have been carefully planned some time before, and perhaps even practiced. Philip's instructions to his bodyguard to hang back would presumably have been given at such a time. Pausanias' acting at this occasion would therefore surely not have been an act of unplanned opportunism, as he would have been able to recognise the opportunity this offered, and plan his actions accordingly.<sup>559</sup> This is supported by Diodorus describing elsewhere how the

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<sup>554</sup> Griffith 1979, 689f.

<sup>555</sup> Diod. 16.93.9.

<sup>556</sup> Green 1991, 107, though Green still feels Pausanias had help and encouragement from others.

<sup>557</sup> Diod. 16.91.4.

<sup>558</sup> Diod. 16.93.1-3.

<sup>559</sup> Develin 1981, 89.



assassin had horses waiting, and would have reached them were it not for his having caught his foot in a vine and fallen.<sup>560</sup>

If this was carefully planned, then the choice of occasion must be examined. Whilst the situation offered an opportunity to murder Philip, Pausanias' closeness to the king as a bodyguard would surely have offered multiple opportunities to commit the murder carefully and quietly elsewhere. The theatre must have chosen for a reason. One should consider the idea that Pausanias chose the public occasion as he felt it offered the best opportunity to publicly restore his honour before the very courtiers who most likely knew of his humiliation. And this is not all. Philip did not enter the theatre without fanfare:

"Along with lavish display of every sort, Philip included in the procession statues of the twelve gods wrought with great artistry and adorned with a dazzling show of wealth to strike awe in the beholder, and along with these was conducted a thirteenth statue, suitable for a god, that of Philip himself, so that the king exhibited himself enthroned amongst the twelve gods."<sup>561</sup>

Philip presumably aimed such a display, like the entrance into the theatre without bodyguards, at the multitude of Greeks present at Aegae for the celebrations:

"Out of all Greece he summoned his personal guest friends and ordered members of his court to bring along as many as they could of their acquaintances from abroad."<sup>562</sup>

Pausanias' demonstration would thus not have been to the Macedonian court, but to prominent citizens of almost every city in Greece.

## (ii) An Assassin's Assistance?

It would seem then that a case can be made for Pausanias working alone, reasonably inspired by his own grievances. However, "It is believed," says Justin, "that Pausanias had been suborned by Olympias, mother of Alexander, and that

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<sup>560</sup> Diod. 16.94.3-4.

<sup>561</sup> Diod. 16.92.5.

<sup>562</sup> Diod. 16.91.5.

Alexander was not unaware of the plot to murder his father.”<sup>563</sup> Plutarch also states that:

“It is said that when Pausanias met the young prince and complained to him of the injustice he had suffered, Alexander quoted the verse from Euripides’ ‘Medea,’ in which Medea is said to threaten “The father, bride and the bridegroom all at once.”<sup>564</sup>

Justin goes on to claim that Olympias, as angered by Philip’s repudiation of her as Pausanias was by Philip’s failure to avenge his abuse, not only incited the Orestian to murder Philip, but provided the horses for his escape and

“...when she heard of the king’s assassination she came quickly to the funeral, ostensibly doing her duty; and on the night of her arrival she set a golden wreath on Pausanias’ head while he still hung on the cross, something which no one else but she could have done while Philip’s son was still alive. A few days later, she had the assassin’s body taken down and cremated it over the remains of her husband; she then erected a tomb for him in the same place and, by inspiring superstition in the people, saw to it that funerary offerings were made to him every year. After this she forced Cleopatra, for whom Philip had divorced her, to hang herself, having first murdered her daughter in the mother’s arms; and it was with the sight of her rival hanging there that Olympias achieved the revenge which she herself had hastened by murder. Finally she consecrated to Apollo the sword with which the king was stabbed, doing so under the Myrtale, which was the name Olympias bore as a little girl. All this was done so openly that she appears to have been afraid that the crime might not be clearly demonstrated as her work.”<sup>565</sup>

Certain aspects of such claims can be immediately rejected. Plutarch’s claim must surely have been invented, as even if such a conversation were to have occurred between Pausanias and Alexander, the letter would hardly have revealed it.<sup>566</sup> Plutarch himself appears to doubt the veracity of the claim, beginning as he does with the somewhat tentative “It is said.” That Pausanias had horses waiting for him is not proof of his having had assistance from Olympias or anyone, as he could easily have arranged them himself.<sup>567</sup> As for Justin’s description of Olympias’ behaviour, it is surely not to be believed.<sup>568</sup> It follows the already discussed account of the ill-fated banquet, and shares with this account a fiercely negative depiction of Olympias. Given how much of this version of the banquet episode has been shown to be

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<sup>563</sup> Just. 9.7.1.

<sup>564</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 10.7.

<sup>565</sup> Just. 9.7.10-14.

<sup>566</sup> Hammond 1994, 175.

<sup>567</sup> *Contra* Develin 1981, 89.

<sup>568</sup> Carney 2006, 39f; Griffith 1979, 685; Hammond 1994, 175; Heckel 1981, 157. For opposing views, see Develin 1981, 97; Green 1991, 107.

unlikely, there is little to reason to trust Justin here. That Philip's "repudiating" Olympias represents a misunderstanding of the king's polygamy has already been discussed.

In addition, there are practical problems with Justin's account. Olympias was supposedly able to receive news of Philip's death and reach Aegae in time for the funeral. Exactly how long passed between Philip's murder and his funeral is unknown, but Olympias' actions concerning Pausanias' body following the funeral suggest very much that she was within a few days travel of Aegae, and thus within Macedon.<sup>569</sup> Even if, contrary to what has been argued, Olympias wished Philip dead following the banquet episode, for her to have been anywhere in Macedon would surely demand some degree of reconciliation to having occurred between her and Philip. This would directly undermine Justin's claims.

There is also the fact that for Olympias to have used Pausanias as her means of murdering Philip seems unnecessarily complicated. Whilst it is possible that Olympias might have learned of the Orestian's grievance, for her to involve another party in her schemes risked being revealed should Pausanias be caught and confess everything. In addition, if Pausanias was her agent, why would she encourage him to kill Philip in such an open and risky situation as he did?<sup>570</sup> As has been said, he surely had access enough to Philip to allow him to murder the king more quietly and carefully; to reduce the risk of failure alone, this is surely what Olympias would have preferred. It could perhaps be argued that Olympias talked Pausanias into being her assassin but left the details of the murder to him. The simplest response to this however is that killing Philip in 336 brought no positives for Olympias or, more importantly, Alexander.<sup>571</sup> The absence of threats to the latter's position of heir apparent has already been discussed.

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<sup>569</sup> Just. 9.7.10.

<sup>570</sup> Carney 2006, 40.

<sup>571</sup> *Contra* Develin 1981, 98; Griffith 1979, 686.

### (iii) Summary of Findings

It would thus seem difficult to accept to for Olympias or Alexander's involvement in Philip's murder. To do so by suborning an aggrieved bodyguard and encouraging him to commit the act in the before hundreds of witnesses is frankly implausible. And for Olympias to then indulge in bizarre public celebration of the murderer's actions would surely be lunacy. The idea that Pausanias worked alone is fare more attractive however. Explanation can be found for the situation in which the assassin chose to kill Philip, and for the choice of the king as the focus of his grievances rather than Attalus. Although Diodorus' version of events in particular has provoked confusion, an acceptable timeline for events can be constructed to accommodate this interpretation without leaving any obvious issues unaddressed.

## VI. Conclusions

As was stated at the start of this chapter, the assassin of Philip II is not in doubt. One's answer to the question of whether others were involved with Pausanias is essentially defined by one's interpretation of the effects of Philip's marriage to Cleopatra, in particular the events at the wedding banquet.

The findings of this study would suggest that although Olympias, was accused of involvement in the ancient sources, almost all reasons for them to have been so can be rejected. There is no question of Philip having "repudiated" Olympias, no evidence can be found for her being jealous of Cleopatra due to genuine attraction to Philip, and there is no firm indication that either she enjoyed a prominent position at court as a result of being Alexander's mother, or that if she did, it was under threat. Dissatisfaction or offence on her part could only have been caused, it would seem, by Philip's choice to give Cleopatra the name (or title) of Eurydice.

Similarly, the idea of Philip changing his mind about Alexander as his heir-apparent is derived from Attalus' words at the wedding banquet, and Philip's failure to censure the general. However, such an assumption is completely contrary to everything that had gone before in terms of Philip's careful and continuous advancement of Alexander's career and upbringing. It would also run counter to all common sense, as the best alternative heir available to Philip was the mentally limited Arrhidaeus. Philip's arranging the marriages of Amyntas Perdicca and Alexander of Epirus point to an acknowledgement of this, as indeed does his own union to Cleopatra.

There is no need to view the departure of either mother or son from Macedon following the events at the banquet as infuriated self-imposed exile. Indeed, it is arguably more appropriate to view them as pre-arranged journeys, made with Philip's approval. Circumstantial support can even be found for the idea of Alexander having been sent to Illyria by Philip. Similarly, whilst the Pixodarus affair

offers perhaps the least satisfying conclusion (largely due to its somewhat bizarre nature), it too can be seen as nothing more than a misunderstanding by a youthful and naïve Alexander, who acted somewhat rashly in the circumstances.

Regarding the Lyncestae and Amyntae, it is crucial to separate the question of their guilt from the question of their involvement in Philip's death. The surviving evidence would appear to show that those accused of treason were guilty of it, and those who fled around the same time were accomplices. The case of Alexander the Lyncestian is difficult, and although one cannot be sure either way, the nature of his eventual fall, arrest and execution can best be explained by assuming innocence in 336.

The events of the murder itself support a 'lone gunman' idea. The idea of Olympias and/or Alexander approaching Pausanias is surely too risky to be realistically considered. Furthermore, the circumstances of the murder support the idea of personal vengeance. Pausanias' humiliation was presumably known to some degree or other at the Macedonian court, and his choice of setting surely reflects a wish to make as public a demonstration of avenging this as possible.

The above interpretation brings to mind the famous adage 'when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbably, must be the truth.' It is based very much upon the rejection of existing and in some cases accepted ideas regarding the interpretation of events. The result is one is left with Pausanias as a lone assassin, driven by personal grievance and uninspired by anything or anyone else. It is not necessarily the most likely of conclusions, and it is hardly controversial to expect tension between Philip, Alexander, and/or Olympias. However, so much doubt can be thrown on the alleged actions and events connected with these suspicions, one is forced to reject them; what is left must presumably be accepted.



## Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine, as far possible, whether or not the modern scholar can hope to compose an analytical study of Philip II's reign without resorting to overly conjecture or supposition to prevent incoherence. This was attempted through three case studies, each focusing on a different aspect of Philip's reign, and the questions that arose in each case.

Perhaps inevitably, the answer these studies suggest is both yes and no. To take one example: in the case of Philip's effect on the Macedonian military, one can analyse the dangers faced in 359, calculate the growth of the army during his reign and describe the effect the introduction of the sarissa had on infantry formation and fighting style. However, the conclusion reached for the first point demands the rejection of all the opinions offered by the ancient sources. It is not impossible of course, that the conclusions are correct – sources often have agenda, or are poorly informed – but to reach an essentially opposite conclusion from the same body of evidence does not inspire confidence.

One can find a similar example when examining Philip's interaction with Athens. The most plausible theory regarding the king's intentions in 346 is that he sought peace with Athens not as proof of a plan to abandon his alliance with Thebes, but to prevent the Athenians obstructing his intended campaign against their ally, the Thracian king Cersebleptes. However, by accepting this and the resultant assumption that Philip did not attempt to convince envoys of the First or Second Athenian envoys otherwise, one is left struggling to explore why Aeschines publicly insisted that the king was on the verge of turning on the Thebans, re-founding two cities they had previously destroyed, making them pay for offences committed against fellow Amphictyones and allowing the city they wished destroyed for sacrilege to go unpunished.



One is faced with a similar problem when investigating Philip's murder. The conclusion reached is that Pausanias was indeed driven by his own grievance, and went unaided in his efforts to kill Philip as neither Olympias nor Alexander had realistic cause to want him dead. However, this interpretation argues for the rejection of a considerable proportion of the source material's claims and interpretations.

That such varying interpretations are possible is indicative of the limits of the source material. When considering the Macedonian army under Philip, one is frequently reliant on Diodorus, who at best had only the most basic grasp of military matters, and little interest in them. One of the key sources for Olympias, Justin, is compromised by his original sources' extreme prejudice against her. Perhaps most challenging of all, Aeschines and Demosthenes' speeches offer the most comprehensive sources for Philip's involvement with Greece, yet at times flatly contradict both each other and even themselves. It must always be remembered however, as was also stated at the start of this essay, that the work of the ancient scholar is almost always what is suspected, and most likely, rather than what is certain and provable. That a greater variety of theory may emerge for aspects of Philip's reign does not make the evidence intrinsically unreliable, and certainly does not mean one should abandon all efforts to understand it. Although at times the details are unattainable, more general points and theories can be posited. Even in extreme cases, where only a start and end point are known, one can still draw certain facts about what happened in between. Thus, although the precise timing and process of the sarissa's adoption by the Macedonian army is completely unknown, one can still say with confidence that Philip introduced, and was responsible for the various alterations to arrangement of the forces that used it, as it was not in use at the start of his reign, yet was the basis of Alexander's infantry.

The indication of these studies then would seem to be that it is possible to conduct a serious analytical study of Philip II's reign. There are certainly considerable gaps in the record, particularly concerning his military achievements. Were one to

attempt a longer, perhaps biographical investigation, there would certainly be parts where the author would be reduced to conjecture. As with all such study however, were any of the resultant findings found to be contentious, they would hopefully inspire further investigation to reduce even a little the uncertainty that surrounds them.



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